



## THE CHURCH IN DANGER.

TO THE  
HAMPSHIRE PARSONS.

Manchester, 1st Feb., 1832.

PARSONS,

Do you remember that, in March, 1817, just as the power-of-imprisonment, the Habeas Corpus suspension, the dungeon, and the gagging bills were passing in that Parliament which the Ministry themselves have now so justly *becalled*; do you remember, that, when those bills were passing, and when that parson's tool, CHUTE, had just voted for some of them; do you remember that your fellow, FLEMING, who was then SHERIFF, had, at your command, called a county meeting, to send an address to the King, expressing *pleasure* at the passing of the *base bills*, and *abusing the reformers*; do you remember that I, on that day, told you that your *day of mourning* was not far distant; do you remember, particularly, that your address expressed a resolution on your part to crush us *reformers*, who, you said, aimed at the destruction of the *church*; and do you remember that I moved, as an *amendment*, to leave out the word *church*, and to insert the word *tithes* in its stead, because, said I, "We do aim at the *destruction of the tithes*, and, mind, I tell you that *you will not get those tithes ten years longer*:" if I had said "*fifteen years longer*," I should have been much about right: do you remember these things? I do; and I remember all your conduct, and particularly your conduct *towards me*; and I am now going to see just and appropriate punishment inflicted upon

you, and upon all the *Slapps* and *Far-dells*, and all my "*reverend*" calumniators in every part of the kingdom.

PARSONS, I am going to inflict grief on your very *gizzards*, by showing you the state of the *tithe-affair*, as set forth in what the fellows call "*debates in Parliament*." If there were no other cause for my wishing to see the tithes taken from you, there would be cause more than sufficient in the fact that you are as silent as sows in beans, while a bill is passing to take away the dead bodies of the people, and to cause them to be cut up, instead of being buried with "*burial service*" read over them. What! are you, who are so clamorous against "*infidels*," and who call every one "*an infidel*" who dislikes your exactions; are you now silent? Are you silent while a law is passing to authorise cutters-up of human bodies to take away the bodies of your "*flocks*," just as dog-keepers take away the bodies of rotten sheep or dead horses? What! and do you nurse yourselves in the notion, that if you remain silent while this bill passes, the people are so stupid as to believe that *you* think anything of the *prayers* that you say over the dead? What! have you the brass to hope, that if you keep silent as to this bill, your "*flocks*" will regard you as shepherds "*watchful in season and out of season*" for their good and their salvation? What! when they know, that, if they take away, even without cutting up, one of your *tithe-pigs*, dead or alive, they are liable to be hanged at your prosecution; when they know this (and well do they know it), will they, think you, look upon tithe-pigs as property given to you for reading prayers over the dead; will they look upon this praying as of *any use*, and will they believe that you think it of any use, if *you continue silent* while a *law* is making, authorising people to take away the dead bodies of *your flocks*, and to carry them to a cutting-up shop instead of carrying

them to the churches to be prayed over? Oh! what a cry you set up against the *Catholic Bill*, against the *reformers*, and now against the *Reform Bill*! What an *addressing* and what a petitioning for war against the tithe-destroying "*infidels*" of France! Then how did your *pulpits ring*! But now, when the dead bodies of your flocks are about to be treated like those of the brute creation; when there is before Parliament a bill to authorise the cutting of them to pieces, without any burial service or any prayers over them; when, in short, a bill is passing which tells the people that this service and these prayers are of *no use*; and that it is as well for a human body to be chopped up and flung out, as for it to be deposited in "*consecrated ground*:" when this bill is passing, you are as silent and lie as snug as mice in cheese!

If there were no other cause for my wishing to see the tithes taken from you, this would be cause enough. But there are divers other causes; and one of these is, *your base treatment of me*. I greatly suffered from *imprisonment*; I was *harassed for years*; I was *driven beyond the seas*; I was, at the end of twenty years of sobriety, care, and toil, *reduced to be penniless*; and TO YOU, as the originators, I ascribe all these injuries. I have never lost sight of these injuries, nor of the *authors* of them, the whole of whom, and especially you, seem now to be about to get your *just reward*.

I am now about to insert the *debates*, as they are called. You will see that the affair is just slipping through your fingers. But, before you enter on it, take this along with you: that though you find the names of many men here, as having spoken in favour of *abolishing tithes*, and in favour of putting down the *Protestant hierarchy in Ireland*, every thought of this sort is MY EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY; that is, I, and I only, that have taught the nation to *think* and to *talk* thus: and add to this, that it was YOU; it was YOU, Hampshire parsons, *who made me set about the teaching*; it was your unprovoked malice against me that first set me to

think about this teaching. You and the Government and its law-people thought that I, like other hunted men, should *sink*, should *pine away*, should *fret myself to death*, under my sufferings, so unjustly and basely and maliciously inflicted on me. Oh, no! that was not in my character. I was resolved to take care of my health, to prolong my life, if I could, to work hard and live on little, and coolly and steadily pursue the means of *finally triumphing over you all*, and making you ALL FEEL the just effects of your endeavours to destroy me.

And what were my *means*? My talents, my industry, my blessed temperance, and my perseverance. I pretty well squared the account with the *Government and its law-people*, by PAPER AGAINST GOLD, by LETTER TO TIERNEY, by PUFF-OUT, and by FEAST OF GRID-IRON. But to square accounts WITH YOU, was a tougher job. It was a job that demanded more previous reflection, and more time and more talent in the execution. At last I resolved to set about it, in the "*HISTORY OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION*." I began to lay my plan the moment I got safely out of the reach of the fangs of you all, amongst the kind and happy people of Long Island. The knowledge of the *bills* of the son of old Parson STURGES, which reached me in that island, and of which I was sure YOU were the *real authors*, sharpened my zeal for the work; but PEEL'S BILL brought me home before I could set about it. When I got home, the winding up of my then pecuniary ruin, and the *pressing calls* of Peel's Bill, occupied me until 1824; and then, I, with a mind perfectly at ease, *set at you* with a hearty good will; and in the space of *fourteen months* put upon paper matter which will live for ages upon ages after *your present powers and emoluments* shall have no other thing to record their rise and their existence. This work, which has been translated into, and published in, seven languages; which has been read throughout the whole of the civilised world; and which has surpassed in circulation all books,

the Bible only excepted: this work it is that has *done your business*. It is the *prompter* of every creature that opens its lips against tithes and church-rates and dues and fees. It is the guide of the learned as well as the illiterate. It is the magazine out of which come all the destructive munitions under the effects of which you are falling; and while you feel yourselves falling you are without the smallest power to help yourselves!

While, therefore, you read what was said by the *several members* against the *tithe system*, put it down to me if you please. While you read and STARE at what was said by Lord MORPETH about his *Leeds petition*; while you read the words of Doctor BLACK; put, if you please, *the whole down to me*; or, rather, to *your reverend selves*, as having been the cause of my writing the all-powerful and immortal little book. And do not, I pray you, waste your reverend breaths in unavailing railings against me, as having done this mighty thing from "*motives of revenge*." That is a wrong name to give to the act. Say that I was actuated by a just sense of the wrongs which I had suffered from your unprovoked malignity; say that the laws of my country afforded me no means of obtaining redress from those wrongs; say that the history of the world, from the day when MOSES slew the Egyptian taskmaster down to the present hour, tells us that national deliverance is most commonly the effect of signal wrong-doing to some one individual; say, in short, that here, to hundreds of instances which history records, is added another, that great talents, united with equal spirit, are not *with impunity* to be trampled down or insulted by power, however tremendous, though associated with cruelty the most unsparing, and with craft the most consummate and profound. Heaving a doleful sigh, say this to yourselves; and then read

1. The report of a debate in the House of Commons on the 23d January.

2. The report of a debate in the same place on the 26th January.

3. An article in the *Morning Chronicle* of the 27th January.

The articles are long; but you must read *every word* of them, if you have a mind to have a foretaste "*of that which is to come*." You will find great comfort in what was said by Lord MORPETH on the *RESPECTABILITY of the Leeds petitioners*! To know clearly what this petition was, you must read the article from Dr. BLACK. There, now, take and read it all; and pay attention to the passages that I have marked with *italics*. You will find a pretty good *dose* if you take it all at once; and you may as well swallow the whole off; for sipping will only make it the more painful to get down. When you have swallowed the dose, I will give you some *sugar* to take the nasty taste away.

#### DEBATE OF 23D JANUARY.

Mr. HUME presented a petition from the parish of St. Agnes, in the county of Cork, praying to be relieved from the pressure of tithes, church-rates, and other taxes for the benefit of a church from which they derived no advantage. In the parish from which the petition which he held in his hand proceeded, the number of Catholic inhabitants was 2,500, the Protestant families but four in number, comprising but fourteen individuals. They conceived that, under such circumstances, there was no moral obligation upon them to continue paying an impost of that nature for the benefit of a church from which they derived no advantage. He wished to take that opportunity of vindicating himself from the charge of having done that which was disgraceful—he had yet to learn that there was anything disgraceful in stating a matter of fact in that house. He had simply confined himself to a matter of fact, and it was one fully capable of the most satisfactory proof. *As to tithes, it was in vain to suppose that things would rest where they were*; the legislature must deal with the church-property decisively and definitively; and, for his part, he did not hesitate to declare that, if resident in Ireland, he would do as his ancestors had done in Scotland—he would resist. If his Majesty's Government desired to preserve the peace of the country, which he could not doubt, they would lose not a moment in proposing some measure calculated to put the question now disputed in Ireland upon something like an equitable footing. If they did not, they would feel the necessity of that which they could not supply, namely, *garrisons for the whole of Ireland, to maintain what were called the rights of the church*. He sincerely hoped that the subject would attract the immediate attention of Government. The hon. Member then presented petitions from two parishes in Kilkenny, from one in Tipperary, from Old-

town, and from three other places, complaining of the tithe system.

SIR ROBERT PEEL deprecated any discussion on a subject which had been already referred to a committee. When the proper time came, he should be as ready as any man to deliver his opinions, but now nothing should provoke him into a premature discussion. The hon. and learned Member for Kerry had proposed that the hon. Member for Middlesex should be placed upon the tithe committee, but the hon. Member for Middlesex said it would be of no use to place him there, or for the committee to enter into any inquiries or examinations at all. The right hon. Baronet then proceeded to deny that the refusal to pay tithes in Ireland was at all *so universal* as had been represented, and to add, that he had not used the word disgraceful; but he should not hesitate to apply that term to any attack upon vested rights. It would be disgraceful to the House of Commons to act upon any assumption that the vested rights of the Irish clergy might justly be assailed. To resist their just demands would be tantamount to a *resistance to rent*. He repeated, that the subject was *too delicate* to be discussed at that moment.

MR. O'CONNELL. No man could for a moment contend that the life estate of the Irish clergy ought to be interfered with; but no man could deny that there was in Ireland a growing determination on the part of the people not to continue the payment of tithe. As to the committee, he thought the members of it had been chosen upon a wrong principle; namely, that the people of Ireland had nothing to do with tithes but to pay them, and upon that principle Catholics had been excluded from the committee. He admitted that at present, the resistance to tithes was not universal; but let them only look to the rapidity with which that resistance had within a short time spread, and then let them say what might soon be expected. The attempt to impose a church adverse to the feelings of the people *had failed in Scotland*, and the example was *not lost upon the Irish*. The people of Scotland *unsheathed their broad-swords* and conquered a freedom for themselves; the Irish had taken a different course, and one perfectly natural in their circumstances, and both the Dissenters and the *Church-of-England Protestants were perfectly ready to follow the example of the Catholics*; if left to the people, they might be perfectly assured that they would settle it. If it were left to the people they would set the question at rest. The Irish would make no objections to any proper provision for the Protestant working clergy who attend their duties; but, in fact, the only Protestant clergy who now attend to the wants of the flocks were the curates, who receive the magnificent stipend of 69l. 4s. 9d. Neither party in Ireland wished to prevent the working clergy from obtaining a proper remuneration.

MR. STANLEY thought that a very inconvenient time to enter into a discussion of the

provision for the Irish clergy, and he should not have thought it necessary to rise but for a remark which had fallen from the honourable and learned Member for Kerry, with reference to the principles on which the tithe committee had been formed, and with reference to his intention to propose to add some other members. It would have been more convenient if the hon. and learned Gentleman had attended when the proposition for appointing the committee was discussed, and when the principles of the investigation were laid down by the Government, and had taken that opportunity to make the remarks he had made on this occasion, and had then proposed the additional names. At the same time, one remark made by the hon. and learned Gentleman made it necessary for him to say a few words. In framing the committee, it was the wish of the Government to abstain from putting on it the name of any member who had expressed an absolute and positive determination that no change whatever ought to take place in the church-property; and it had also thought it right to abstain from appointing those who were considered, beyond the reach of argument, bound to the opinion, that nothing but an entire change was a sufficient remedy for the grievance complained of. The Government had constituted the committee so as to keep out extreme opinions of both sides, and make the great body of the committee consist of men of moderate and dispassionate feelings from both sides of the House who would calmly weigh and consider the evidence. That was the ground adopted by his Majesty's Government, after serious deliberation, and they had come to the decision that it would be more expedient to abstain from appointing Roman Catholics on the committee. That decision was not taken from any doubt or fear that the Roman Catholic Members would not, under the obligation imposed on them, conscientiously perform their duties as members of the committee. Had the Ministers thought that the Catholics were inclined to swerve from their duty, they would have been less ready to support them; and there was not a single member of the present Government who had not advocated their claims to take their places in the legislature. The object of selecting members from both sides was, that fair and impartial justice might be done, and both sides must be anxious not to put upon the committee those whose bias might make the appointment not satisfactory to both parties. It was therefore thought more expedient—though that was now made the subject of complaint—not to place the Roman Catholics on the committee, considering that the nature of the subject was such as to make it not proper to refer it to the Roman Catholics. He thought, too, it was acting wisely towards the Catholics themselves, as it was not throwing any imputation on them, or declaring that they had nothing to do with the tithes but to pay them. It was not right to delegate to

them the power of sitting on a committee which was to modify or reform the Protestant church. It was more desirable to delegate that power to a Protestant committee, that the reform might not appear forced on the Protestant church, but willingly adopted by the members of that party. Though the Government had not named any Roman Catholics, Roman Catholic feelings had been consulted, and the opinion of the Roman Catholics would be amply represented in the committee by their Protestant representatives. It was from no accidental circumstance, but from deliberate conviction, that the course which would seem most satisfactory had been adopted. Taking that ground, he would say, that should the hon. and learned Gentleman bring forward a motion to place on the committee his noble Friend—and he was glad that the honourable and learned Member had selected his noble Friend, as it would remove all suspicion from his opposition, for he knew no man whose moderation was greater or whose principles he more respected than those of his noble Friend; but if the hon. and learned Gentleman should propose to place his noble Friend on the committee, he should oppose it, as departing from the rule laid down by the Government when the motion was brought forward. He would say no more than at that time he considered all discussion as most inconvenient. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. RUTHVEN agreed that this was not the proper time for discussion; but he was sure that the Irish Catholics would disapprove of being represented by Protestants in the committee. The committee was not so selected as to give satisfaction to them. The spirit of resistance to tithes was almost general throughout Ireland. It was on that ground that he wished to see the question speedily set at rest, and the people relieved. They did not wish to injure the present possessors, but they felt that, beyond these possessors, no persons had any claim to the tithes, and to the continuation of the system, therefore, they thoroughly objected. He would be one of the last men to submit to a mob; but he called on the legislature to put the law in such a state as not to provoke a mob, and not to be compelled to submit to one.

Mr. WYSE concurred with the honourable Member, that the resistance to tithe in Ireland was extending. At this time last year it was limited to one parish in Kilkenny, and to a small district of Queen's County. The resistance had now the feelings of the whole country in its support, and a system could not be continued which was the oppression of Ireland and the opprobrium of the legislature. The resistance of the people was directed against the system, not against the individuals. He knew several cases of clergymen, who, having behaved well, the people were spontaneously rewarded by the Catholic peasantry. They gave the Protestant clergy money as a donation, which they refused as tithes. If the question had not been taken up by the

legislature, the resistance would have spread from six counties over every part of Ireland. He would say, as a Catholic Member, that if he had been placed on the committee, he should have refused to act, because doing so would have excited jealousy. But what would the Irish think of a committee which had the extremes of both sides on it, and yet excluded the Catholics from all participation? Were the Catholics so dangerous that they could not be suffered to share in any such investigation?

Colonel PERCEVAL rose to contradict the assertion of the honourable and learned Member for Kerry, that all the Protestants of Ireland were engaged in the atrocious conspiracy to resist the payment of tithes.

Mr. O'CONNELL had not said that all the Protestants were engaged in it, and had not called it an atrocious conspiracy.

Colonel PERCEVAL knew that the honourable and learned Member never meant to assert that the Protestants of Ireland were engaged in opposing tithes, and he called it an atrocious conspiracy, not the honourable and learned Member. The Catholics were not averse from paying tithes, it was the agitators who were the cause of all the evils under which Ireland was suffering. (Hear, hear.) The loyal Protestants of Ireland saw with disgust meetings to agitate the country held in Dublin, under the eyes and at the very door of Government, which did not think proper to come forward and act as all loyal and honourable men had a right to expect from it. He knew that there would be no peace for Ireland while it was under the influence of these conspirators. The Roman Catholic peasantry would gladly pay tithes, were it not that they were afraid that their houses would be burned and their cattle houghed. He was sorry to have troubled the House, as he only wished to deny that the Protestants were engaged in any conspiracy to resist the payment of tithes.

Mr. SHEIL denied that only a few Protestants had entered into the conspiracy, as it was called. On a former night it was stated that the Protestants were much disposed to resist the payment of tithes. The Presbyterians were surely not favourable to tithes. It was true, that the Protestants in Ireland had encouraged the Roman Catholics not to pay tithes. It would have been better to have allowed the Roman Catholics to have the option of refusing to serve on the committee; but the Government made them no offer. Even Lord Killeen was surprised at not hearing of any offer. He denied that the committee was impartial. There were three Members for the English Universities on it, as well as the right honourable Gentleman, formerly Secretary of Ireland, who had been a staunch supporter of the English church. He thought it was, at least, an error of judgment not to place Roman Catholics on the committee. There were two parts of the tithe question. The Protestant part was for the collection of them, the Roman Catholic part was the payment of



tithes. He was bound to say for himself and his country, that the Catholics ought to have been placed on the committee. It was a great complaint in Ireland that justice was not fairly administered because it was administered by one party; and would not the same complaint be made of this tithe committee? Was being a member of it not as important as being a grand juror? The report of the committee would have to receive the sanction of the House, and on that the Roman Catholic Members might vote; but they must not make suggestions in the committee. The Roman Catholics, then, would have a power to vote, but not the power to get the information which might enable them to vote correctly. (Hear, hear.) He had no doubt, indeed, that justice would be done by the committee, but that was not enough—the Irish people ought to have the conviction that justice was done to them. It was a well-known saying, that justice should not only be pure, but it should be also unsuspected. By so constituting the committee, the Government was giving cause for suspicion. It would not satisfy the people of Ireland. The legislature ought to look, not only to principles but to the feelings of the people; it ought even to legislate consistently with their imaginations, and this it had not done. The Roman Catholics would not be pleased with their Protestant representatives. He admitted, indeed, that among these representatives were many men in whom he placed great confidence, and he was sure that justice would be done when he saw on the committee the Nestor of Irish patriots, the right honourable Member for Waterford; but because the committee was wholly Protestant it would not satisfy the people of Ireland.

Mr. RUTHVEN explained, that the Protestants in his part of the country generally were averse from the payment of tithes, but they did not like to take a part in the plan for resisting them.

Lord ALTHORP was aware that it was very inconvenient to prolong the discussion; but he wished to state the ground on which the Government had proceeded in forming the committee. It was necessary that the choice should be made with great care. There were prejudices on both sides, but the Government could not look to one side only. The course the Government pursued was to steer between them. If it had not placed Roman Catholics on the committee, it had placed those on it in whom the Catholics had confidence, and to whom they could make no objection. The Government had, after considerable deliberation, placed the representatives of seven large bodies of Catholics on the committee. It was impossible, therefore, for the Catholics to suppose that their interests would not be attended to in the committee. On the other hand, the Government had to look at the feelings of the Protestants both in Ireland and England. It had to look at the feelings of the Protestants in both countries; and the feelings of the Protestants, when the

question was concerning the Protestant church, were likely to be roused into jealousy if they were not at liberty to settle the question themselves. The Government had come to this determination after serious consideration, and it thought that the course it had pursued was the best calculated to promote the satisfactory adjustment of the question. Members were nominated in whom the Catholics placed confidence, but, being Protestants, they could not excite any unfounded jealousy.

Mr. CRESSET PELHAM deprecated the interference of Catholic Members with the property of the Protestant church, and cautioned the House not to alter the appointment it had already made.

Mr. Walker said a few words, which were inaudible.

The petition was then read.

Mr. HUME, in moving that it be printed, observed, that he was not opposed in principle to the right hon. Baronet (the Member for Tamworth), as to the respect proper to pay to the rights of individuals. He had never proposed to take any of their property from the present race of clergy, and he had laid, on a former occasion, resolutions on the table of the House, one of which was a declaration that it was necessary to respect the rights of individuals. He should hold it a disgrace to any man who should propose to interfere with the property of individuals.

Mr. O'CONNELL congratulated the right hon. Secretary on the change which had taken place in his resolution with respect to tithes. He was happy to observe that the right hon. Gentleman had abandoned that fixedness of opinion which had led him to declare against all attempts to legislate with respect to the property of the church.

Mr. STANLEY denied that his opinions had undergone the slightest alteration. He had always held it to be in the highest degree unjust and improper in the legislature to interfere with the property of the church for purposes not exclusively ecclesiastical; but he had, during the whole course of his Parliamentary life, maintained the right of Parliament to superintend the application of the property of the church—considering, as he did, that it was a corporation bound to exercise the trust, and apply the receipts to the uses for which they were appropriated. That opinion he had always hitherto held, and he held it now without the shadow of a change.

#### DEBATE OF 26TH JANUARY.

Lord MORPETH presented a petition from the inhabitants of Leeds, in borough meeting assembled, praying that the House would take into its immediate consideration the expediency of making a permanent provision for the poor of Ireland. The meeting, he observed, at which that petition was agreed to, was most numerously and respectably attended, and the petition was adopted by a very large majority of those present, and in the course of two days it received no fewer than

6,000 signatures. The petition further prayed that no measure of that nature, however urgent the necessity for it was, might be adopted until there was a previous enactment, assigning a certain portion of the church lands and revenues to the purposes for which they were originally intended—namely, to feed the hungry and clothe the naked.

Mr. STRICKLAND would certainly support the prayer of the petition, for he desired, as earnestly as any man could, to see the benefits of a permanent provision for the poor conferred upon Ireland, at the same time that he by no means desired to see that country visited with a system such as the present poor-laws of England. The *tithe system in Ireland must undergo some alteration*, that was indisputable; and there was little doubt that alteration, too, *must soon reach England*.

Mr. JAMES GRATTAN said, there could be question that the people of Ireland were entitled to relief, and when property was appointed to defray the expense of such relief, there would be few to deny that the church ought to bear its part.

Mr. O'CONNELL stated, with reference to the subject of tithes, he should to-morrow, before five o'clock, move that Lord Killeen be added to the committee on tithes; and if that motion were not agreed to, he should divide the House.

Mr. HUME observed, that the want of poor-laws in Ireland had effected a great change in the population of England. *As to tithes, there was an end to them in Ireland*. The House of Commons might meet and might vote, but the people of Ireland had settled the question of tithes. With respect to other church-property, it was entirely at the disposal of the legislature; it was public property, for the purposes of education, religion, or other purposes. He would pay the clergy liberally, but he would give no pay to those who worked none. He called on the Government to take up the matter, and put an end to all sinecures in the church on both sides of the water.

Mr. JOHN WEYLAND was a friend to reform in Ireland, and to making provision for the poor; but he would not take that altogether from the church. He would also take something from the landlords, and he would protest against the notion of taking the tithes from the church of Ireland. The hon. Member for Middlesex said the people of Ireland had settled the question of tithes by refusing to pay them. It was a disgrace to that House not to enforce the laws; and it was the duty of that House to compel obedience. It was disgraceful to any Member of that House to support or sanction people who were disobedient to the law. (Hear, hear.) He would modify the laws if they were bad; but he never would support those who rebelled against the law. It was not worthy of the character of English gentlemen to say, that the law was to be made to conform to the wishes of those who opposed the law. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. BLACKNEY said, that the tithe system was much worse in Ireland than in England. *Ireland was disturbed from one end to the other by the tithe system*. He was not a sectarian, and therefore did not feel peculiarly aggrieved. He only felt himself called upon to say a few words in consequence of what fell from the hon. Member for Middlesex, but he thought it not a proper time to discuss the question, while a committee was sitting to inquire into the subject. In six counties of Ireland—Kilkenny, Wexford, Tipperary, Carlow, Queen's County, and Kildare—the system of tithes was *actually at an end*. The people would not pay them, and they had come to the resolution *not to pay this unjust and oppressive tax*. They were united to evade the payment of tithes, but they did not break the law. *The system could not last*. The goods taken on distraint could not be sold. There were eight or ten law processes by which the payment of tithes could be enforced, but they were all evaded. The opposition was given by the peasantry. He knew one parish in Kildare, in which the people had consented to pay 4d. an acre to resist the payment of tithes, and they declared that they would rather subscribe 2s. or 5s. an acre than not resist the payment.

An hon. Member, who had been requested so to do, supported the petition.

Sir EDWARD SUGDEN said, the hon. Member for Carlow had stated, that six counties in Ireland had refused to make the payment of tithes; and the persons who did that on a large scale were the worst subjects of the King and the worst enemies of the country. He put it to the noble Lord, if, in the present state of Ireland, it would be wise to extend the franchise to men who openly resisted the law? If that were the state of Ireland, could the franchise be prudently given to them? It was impossible that a country could continue to exist in the present state of Ireland.

Mr. D. O'CONNELL said the Irish Bill was not calculated to extend the franchise. At the Union there were 300,000 voters. Now there were not above 15,000; and the bill would not add 300 to the constituency. He denied that the people violated any law by refusing to pay tithes. The law said that those who did not pay tithes should have their property distrained; well, their property was distrained; was that disobedience to the laws? *The entire national will was against tithes*. When English gentlemen said they were determined to enforce the law, he would ask, would gentlemen enforce any law which the universal will resisted? Why, then, do that to the people of Ireland? If they could not enforce the payment of tithes except by sending out horse and foot, that must be the case. Let them employ the military. The people would not buy tithe property; and he defied any law to make the people buy what they did not like to buy.

Mr. CALLAGHAN said that there must be a compulsory provision for the poor in Ireland. There were thousands of destitute people in Cork, who were in a state of starvation. It

was impossible that society could continue as at present. Until there was a relief for the poor, the country would be a prey to mobs.

Mr. SADLER wished to explain, that the meeting at which the petition was prepared was not a great one. He had had no hand in convening it. He took no part in the meeting, because it was a packed meeting. He admitted, and had done so before, that *tithes were the relic of a barbarous system, and ought to be done away*. At the same time, he wished that a general system of assessment, affecting landlords as well as the clergy, should be adopted. Were the landlords, who cleared their estates, not to be made to contribute to the wants of the people as well as the clergy? The resolution *came to at the meeting embraced all church-property*—that which had been misapplied long ago, as well as the tithes that were now in the possession of the church. The indefinite postponement of giving poor-laws to Ireland was not, in his opinion, the view entertained by the people of Leeds. He would then give notice, that he would, on an early day, submit a motion to the House for giving poor-laws to Ireland.

Sir JOHN BRIDGES hoped to see poor-laws introduced into Ireland; he meant the English system of poor-laws, corrected and modified.

Lord MORPETH explained. The petition had 6,000 signatures, which showed that *Mr. Baines was at least supported by a large portion of the people of Leeds*.

Sir ROBERT PEEL would have heard with great satisfaction had any of the members of the Government *got up to disclaim* the doctrine of the honourable Member for Middlesex. With respect to the present state and condition of Ireland, he thought his Majesty's Government was bound *to protest against the doctrines of the honourable Member for Middlesex*. The honourable Gentleman said that the tithe question was settled in Ireland, without entering into the discussion whether the state could meddle with the property of the church as a corporation, which was quite a distinct question. It was undoubted that *the individual clergymen now in existence had as good a legal right to their tithes as any man had to his estate*. The honourable Gentleman said that, by a combination amongst the people of Ireland to defeat the claims of the clergy to tithes, the question was practically disposed of. If the honourable Gentleman thought it impossible to collect the tithes for the church, could he collect them for the state? Would not the same combination defeat him, if he wished to levy these tithes for the state? It was a melancholy reflection—he was not alluding to the question of the charters of corporations, but to the claims of individual clergymen—it was a melancholy reflection, if the Irish landlords *sanctioned the despoiling of the church* (hear, hear)—if the specific legal claim of the clergy could not be enforced, that by a combination the legal claim to tithes could be defeated. The landlords might depend, that

two years would not pass before a similar step would be taken *to defeat the payment of rent*. Why should it not be done? The learned Gentleman (the Member for Kerry) said that there was no violation of the law—the people had only refused to satisfy the claims of the clergy; but, if they succeeded in defeating these claims, what was to prevent them forming the same combinations against the payment of rent? What remedy had the landlord more than the clergyman, except that of ejectment, which he would find it difficult to execute? What protection was there for the property of the landlord, should it be invaded by a similar combination? (Hear, hear.) If the landlords thought that they were likely to benefit by encouraging such combinations, never were men more miserably deceived. Whatever settlement might be made of the tithe question, he hoped no parties would be suffered to profit by their own wrong. (Hear, hear.) If the honourable Gentleman succeeded in appropriating the church-property as he wished to the state, at least land in the possession of individuals *ought not to be benefited by despoiling the clergy*; and let gentlemen remember, that if the tithes of the clergy fell into the *hands of the state*, they would probably be levied with greater rigour and to a greater extent than they were in the hands of the clergy. The honourable and learned Gentleman (the Member for Kerry) had talked of the employment of the military—was that recommended by the honourable and learned Gentleman? He had seen enough of the employment of such means not to wish it, but at the same time it was their duty, both as members of the legislature and members of society, not to lend any countenance to those who combined to evade the law or to defeat the legal claims of the clergy. (Hear.)

Lord ALTHORP was quite ready to enter his protest against the doctrines of his hon. Friend, the Member for Middlesex, but he did not think it necessary on all occasions to enter a protest against all the doctrines he disapproved of. The right honourable Gentleman must know that the Government disapproved of such doctrines, but it was not convenient to provoke discussion on the presentation of a petition. (Hear.) He repeated, however, that he did not approve of the doctrines of his hon. Friend. The House must know, from the manner in which his right honourable Friend had introduced the question of Irish tithes to their notice, what were the opinions of the Government. And knowing that, he felt it less necessary to enter his protest against the opinions of his honourable Friend. He would then say, that he thought he highly disapproved of the combination alluded to; and whether this was within or without the limits of the law, he was sure if it was suffered, that it would endanger property in general. (Hear.)

Sir R. PEEL did not impute to the noble Lord the slightest approbation of such proceedings, and he was glad to hear the noble Lord's declaration against them.

Lord MORPETH moved that the petition be referred to the committee on Irish tithes.

Mr. SHEIL observed, that the petition related to a matter of general interest, which had excited the people a great deal. That they were still in a state of excitement was evident. Did the right hon. Baronet speak as a lawyer, or as a legislator? If he spoke as a legislator it was different; and he ought not only to enforce the law as it is, but inquire what it ought to be; and in considering what it ought to be, the legislator was bound to take into his consideration the state of facts at the moment. Had the right hon. Baronet suggested that the law should be changed? Had he recommended more severity? From the course pursued for the last five or six years by the right hon. Baronet, he did not think he could now recommend that. How then were tithes to be collected? The Irish landlords thanked the right hon. Gentleman for entertaining fears for them they did not entertain for themselves. The fact at present was, that the whole Irish people were revolted by tithes; that was indubitable—and what could the legislator do? Would he take the tithe pig? What could he do when the whole nation was conspiring against his laws? That was the case in Ireland. What was the case with respect to Catholic Emancipation in Ireland? That it was withheld until it could no longer be denied. It was not conceded until it was felt by those who conceded it to be what they conceived a dire necessity. It was not until that last moment that the right hon. Baronet opposite, did himself the immortal honour of proposing Catholic Emancipation. It was impossible to force down public opinion in Ireland; it might be regulated, but it could not be coerced. He implored the House, therefore, to take measures in time on this important subject, or otherwise, when they did take them, they would prove ineffectual. He implored them to pass such a measure as might be satisfactory to all classes; at all events to pass such a measure as might be satisfactory to the most numerous classes, without including that destruction to the remainder which delay might involve.

Sir R. PEEL, in explanation, said, that all he insisted upon was, *that the private rights of every incumbent ought to be sacred*. His argument was, that if the doctrine were maintainable, that the private rights of every incumbent were not entitled to protection, the same doctrine would equally apply to the private rights of the owners of every other description of property.

Mr. HUME, in answer to the attacks which had been made upon him by the right hon. Baronet and others, declared they had attributed to him doctrines which he had never maintained. He had not said a single word, either then or at any other time, *against the private rights of incumbents*, or against the private rights of the possessors of any other description of property. He had called upon his Majesty's Ministers to pay attention to the petition. He had said that there were two great evils in Ireland—the *evil of tithes*, and

the *evil of church-property*; and he had said that even if the question of tithes were settled, the evil arising from the *great disproportion of church-property* would still remain to be got rid of.

Mr. BLACKNEY explained; but the cries of “spoke, spoke,” were so loud and incessant, that all that we could hear was, that it was a *bugbear* to say that by regulating the tithes in Ireland the property of the landowners would be endangered.

The motion for referring the petition to the committee on tithes was then agreed to.

#### DOCTOR BLACK'S ARTICLE,

27TH JANUARY.

A discussion took place last night in the House of Commons—on the presentation by Lord Morpeth of a petition from the inhabitants of Leeds, in borough meeting assembled, praying for a permanent provision for the poor of Ireland—which strikingly illustrates the danger of a want of sympathy between the people of a country and their legislature. The petitioners (6,000 signed the petition in the course of two days) prayed that no provision might be adopted until there was a previous enactment assigning *a certain portion of the tithes and church lands to the purposes for which they were originally intended—namely, to feed the hungry and clothe the naked*. The statement by his Lordship of the purport of the petition led naturally enough to the consideration of the very ticklish question of Irish tithes. Mr. Strickland observed, that “the tithe system in Ireland must undergo some alteration; and there was little doubt that alteration too must soon reach England.”—Mr. Hume said, “*as to tithes, there was an end to them in Ireland*. The House of Commons might meet, and might vote, but the people of Ireland had settled the question of tithes.” This plain way of putting the case excited the indignation of Mr. John Weyland, who “protested against the notion of taking the tithes from the Church of Ireland.” The honourable Member for Middlesex said the people of Ireland had settled the question of tithes by refusing to pay them. It was a disgrace to that House not to enforce the laws; and it was the duty of that House to compel obedience. It was disgraceful to any Member of the House to support or sanction people who were disobedient to the law. (Hear.) He would modify the laws if they were bad; but he never would support those who rebelled against the law. It was not worthy of the character of English gentlemen to say, that the law was to be made to conform to the wishes of those who opposed the law.” (Hear.)

When there is a sympathy between the people and those who make their laws, the laws will harmonise with the inclinations and opinions of the people as a matter of course; and, in such a case, the people will be attached to the laws, and will yield a ready obedience to them; for it would be a contradiction in terms to say that men who can obtain laws to their liking, would, when the easy mode of altera-

tion presents itself, think of opposing or resisting the laws. If Mr. John Weyland were capable of reflection, he would see that it is because the law in Ireland has been the enemy of the people, and that those who made the laws were not the friends of the people, that the people are enemies of the laws. Mr. John Weyland would modify the laws if they were bad. This is very kind and very considerate in Mr. John Weyland. But one swallow does not make a summer. Would the legislature modify the laws because they are bad, and precisely because they are bad? for that is the question. Now, Mr. John Weyland ought to know, that if there is one lesson which experience has taught the people of Ireland more than another, it is, that resistance to bad laws is the only mode by which they can obtain an alteration of them. Was not the Catholic Question, for instance, conceded at last, not because the Catholics had justice on their side, but because it was dangerous any longer to resist them? Had not the Catholics been hawking about their sores, knocking at the door of every great man with humble petitions; and were they not spurned and neglected till they became furious agitators, and carried alarm into the camp of their enemies? Will this lesson ever be forgotten? Let Mr. John Weyland be assured, that the evils of injustice cannot be confined to one side—that disobedience and retaliation follow naturally and necessarily in the train of laws made not to protect but to oppress. Why is it that we are now seeking an alteration in the constitution of the legislature, but that the conviction has become general that the interests of those who make the laws are not identical with the interests of the people, and, consequently, that the laws must be partial and unjust?

Mr. BLACKNEY stated, that "in six counties of Ireland—Kilkenny, Wexford, Tipperary, Carlow, Queen's County, and Kildare—the system of tithes was actually at an end. The people would not pay them, and they had come to the resolution not to pay this unjust and oppressive tax. They were united to evade the payment of tithes, but they did not break the law. The system could not last. The goods taken on distraint could not be sold. There were eight or ten law processes by which the payment of tithes could be enforced, but they were all evaded. The opposition was given by the peasantry. He knew one parish in Kildare, in which the people had consented to pay 4d. an acre to resist the payment of tithes, and they declared that they would rather subscribe 2s. or 5s. an acre than not resist the payment."

A very striking illustration of the feelings of the Irish is to be found in a letter published in the Irish papers, from Mr. R. Cassidy to the Dean of Kildare, and the Rev. Rawdon Green, in answer to an application to him for tithes:—

"Mr. ROBERT CASSIDY takes leave to submit for the consideration of the Dean of Kildare, a copy of a petition from the

"parish of Lea, complaining of very gross abuses in the appointment and application of tithes and charitable donations in the parish. The circumstances stated in the annexed petition, and the recent conduct of the 'Spiritual' Peers, in the division of the House of Lords, on the Reform Bill, have satisfied Mr. R. Cassidy that voluntary payments to the clergy of the established church would sanction a system of profligate immorality, and tend to retard the legislative reform so imperatively necessary to relieve the people of England and of Ireland from their oppressive burdens. Mr. R. Cassidy, under such a conviction, does not consider himself justified to support, by voluntary contributions, a system of plunder and corruption, at variance with the doctrines inculcated by the meek and charitable founder of the Christian religion. Mr. Robert Cassidy, at the same time, takes leave to assure the Dean of Kildare and the Rev. Rawdon Green, that he does not withhold his tithes from any wish to be relieved from a tax to which the land he holds is subjected; and when the tithes and other church-property are allocated to the purposes for which such property was originally set apart by the pious founders of the Christian religion, viz.—the support of the sick, the aged, and the poor—the erection of churches, hospitals, and schools—and the decent maintenance of the clergy who minister to the spiritual wants of the parishioners committed to their care—Mr. R. C. will not only pay with cheerfulness the present amount of tithes chargeable on his lands, but any further sum deemed necessary to attain these important and long-neglected objects."

Now why, we ask, do the people of Ireland adopt this course with regard to tithes? It is precisely because they are firmly persuaded that this is the only way in which they can obtain a modification or repeal of bad laws. Does Mr. John Weyland doubt the existence of such a persuasion? Does he think that its existence reflects disgrace only on those who seriously entertain it? The people of Ireland have all the distrust which oppression usually engenders. So accustomed are they to unprincipled conduct in their superiors, that nothing is so difficult as to persuade an Irishman in any case that there is not a concealed purpose under the avowed one. Being generally distrustful, they are more particularly distrustful of the declarations of such gentlemen as Mr. John Weyland, when they profess their readiness to modify bad laws, provided they will only obey bad laws till they are modified. But in this matter of the Irish church, even the English are full of suspicions. In an article in *The Leeds Mercury* of Saturday last, the editor of that influential journal observes with much shrewdness, speaking of the Leeds petition:—

"We the more earnestly urge this subject on the people of England, because Ministers

"and Parliament will naturally revolt from touching the tithes, and they will never of themselves give to the poor their rightful portion. The fact is, that these tithes are a comfortable appendage to the aristocracy—a snug pension fund for younger sons and brothers of noble families—a rich host of sinecures for those who have neither industry nor brains to gain their livelihood by an honest profession. Never was an abuse more monstrous than the temporalities of the Irish church establishment. And the best ministers, when themselves of high families, are too prone to screen such abuses. Even Earl Grey, unparalleled as his sacrifices of ministerial patronage have been, has yielded to the temptation of showering ecclesiastical and other preferments on his own relations, and thus has brought upon a lofty and noble character the only stain it bears. The people, then, must fight this battle for themselves, and struggle against many difficulties, till they have nearly won the victory, and then crowds of aristocrats will change sides, and partake the triumph."

These are the sentiments of ninety-nine out of every hundred disinterested individuals in this country. The people say to themselves, Here is a set of men who have obtained the power of making laws for us, but who have, in many things, an interest of their own quite opposed to our interest. We must manage matters as well as we can under such circumstances, obeying where we must, and evading where there is an opening; but, whatever we do, let us not commit the unspeakable folly of supposing that they who profit by abuses will ever voluntarily remove them. We lay it down as a broad position, that there cannot be a better criterion of the quality of a legislature than the disposition of a people to obey or disobey the laws. Disorder is the child of injustice. Let Mr. John Weyland bear then in mind that there is nothing miraculous in Ireland. Ye shall know the tree by its fruits; and from the fruits of legislation in Ireland you can be at no loss to pronounce the character of the legislation. The compelling obedience to the law is an idle phrase in the case of Ireland. You may make laws for Ireland much more easily than compel obedience to them. The proverb says, one man may lead a horse to the water, but twelve cannot make him drink. But the difficulty with Ireland is, that the people in the case of tithes really violate no law. The law is suffered to take its course, but its course is inoperative.

Mr. O'CONNELL "denied that the people violated any law by refusing to pay tithes. The law said that those who did not pay tithes should have their property distrained. Well, their property was distrained. Was that disobedience to the laws? The entire national will was against tithes. When English gentlemen said they were determined to enforce the law, he would ask, would gentlemen enforce any law which the universal will resisted? Why then do that to the people of Ireland? If they do not en-

"force the payment of tithes, except by sending out horse and foot, that must be the case. Let them employ the military."

When the law and the universal will are at variance, the law can have no hold. It is as if a summons were sent to the lifeless figures on the deck of the plague ship, which, in one of Mr. Galt's novels, floats up the Thames to the terror of the London citizens. So long as the Irish people will not pay tithes, and not buy property distrained for tithes, the more the law is appealed to, the more its impotence becomes manifest.

Sir R. PEEL "thought his Majesty's Government was bound to protest against the doctrines of the honourable Member for Middlesex. The honourable Gentleman said that the tithe question was settled in Ireland. Without entering into the discussion whether the state could meddle with the property of the church as a corporation, which was quite a distinct question, it was undoubtedly true that the individual clergymen now in existence had as good a legal right to their tithes as any man had to his estate." The distinction taken by the right honourable Baronet between the property of the corporation and the life interest of the individual members of it, is quite correct. Whatever change be adopted, let the rights of individuals be respected. It is, however, one of the mischiefs attendant on the pushing claims on one side too far, that the other side is disposed not to go far enough. Our opinion is, that the longer this struggle continues, the worse it will be for the clergy. They ought to have their incomes secured to them, without reference to the original distinction of tithes, because they entered on the livings with an understanding that a rule—quite different from the ancient—was in force. Let the reform be prospective. But, as we have said, it is one of the mischiefs of that sort of vicious legislation, which rouses against it the feelings of the whole nation, that the remedy is often in turn a departure from justice. The abomination of a sinecure church for the aristocracy has been clung to with so much pertinacity, that at length the hatred of the institution is extended to the individuals belonging to it. Sir Robert Peel endeavoured to frighten the landlords by holding up to them the encouragement which success in evading tithes would give to the peasants to attempt to evade payment of rents by similar means. "The landlords," he said, "might depend upon it, that two years would not pass before a similar step would be taken to defeat the payment of rent." The landlords are too old birds to be caught with chaff. There is such a thing, Sir Robert, as history. We have now the history of a number of attempts in different counties successfully made to resist the payment of tithes; but in no one instance was any such attempt followed by a resistance to the payment of rent. It requires no conjuror to explain why men may be very anxious to rid themselves of a tax without wishing to put an end to property. When you say that no rent will be paid, you suppose the

monstrous state of things, that any man may seize on what property he pleases—a state of things which would not last one week. If a man paying rent for 500 acres were to say he would pay no more, what is there to prevent some sturdy Milesian, who possesses no land, from taking a fancy for the whole or part of these 500 acres, or another for detrundering him in turn? No, no; the Milesians may not be the most prudent people in the world, but their instinct will soon teach them that the very existence of a people is bound up with a respect for property. The Scotch were as staunch in their refusal to pay tithes as the Irish, and compelled a permanent settlement, by which that country has been greatly benefited; but in the bitterest period of their warfare against tithes, they never refused to pay rent.—Mr. Sheil touched with keen sarcasm the sore place in the right hon. Gentleman with respect to Ireland:—"The Irish landlords (he said) thanked the right honourable Gentleman for entertaining fears for them they did not entertain for themselves. The fact at present was, that the whole Irish people were revolted by tithes; that was indubitable—and what could the legislator do? Would he take the tithe pig? What could he do when the whole nation was conspiring against his laws? That was the case in Ireland. What was the case with respect to Catholic Emancipation in Ireland? That it was withheld until it could be no longer denied. It was not conceded until it was felt by those who conceded it to be what they conceived a dire necessity. It was not until that last moment that the right honourable Baronet opposite did himself the immortal honour of proposing Catholic Emancipation."

No, no; it is not for the right honourable Gentleman, after the lesson which he taught the Irish people, to turn round on them and exclaim, "For God's sake, do not agitate—pay the tithe-pig in peace—keep up the abomination of a church without a people, consuming not only the part of the church but the part of the people. You may gain greatly by obedience to the laws, but you can gain nothing by agitation. All the good which the people of Ireland have ever obtained from their superiors has been a voluntary emanation from their benevolence." *We rejoice with exceeding great joy that there is at last a fair prospect that the Irish will be relieved from the burden of a sinecure church, and the British Empire from the reproach of seeking to degrade the Irish people by upholding this badge of their slavery.*

There, now, Parsons; how long do you think that you will have the tithes? You will, as I do, laugh at the protest of Lord ALTHORP. You will ask of what use it can be, except to make people cry out against the Ministers. And you will, as I do mine, shake your heads at the solemn declarations of HUME and O'CON-

NELL against touching *vested rights*! As to the former, he cannot be expected to know much about the nature of these rights; but the latter *must* know that the *advowsons* are much nearer, in their nature, to private property, *than the tithes are*; and that, if the proposition of these gentlemen were adopted, these advowsons would be *swept away at once*! . . . But, parsons, I must quit you for the present, in order to *go to dinner*. I will come back to you when that is over!

### DINNER TO MR. COBBETT.

Manchester, 3 Feb. 1832.

I BEG my readers in the South to observe, that the CHAIRMAN at this dinner, Mr. JOHN FIELDEN, is one of the *greatest* of the *great* manufacturers in this county; and, then, I do beseech them to *read the whole of his speech with attention*. I beg lords and all landowners and farmers to read it; and they will then see, whether it be *dangerous to them* to put men into Parliament from these manufacturing towns. Compare this speech with the goose-gabble stuttered forth by the belchers and hiccupers and spitters from Bellamy's! It was a more neat and more useful speech than I had heard for years. It was received with a degree of admiration which showed the good taste and sound understanding of the company; and I cannot help being proud that I was the cause of calling it forth.

WM. COBBETT.

*From the Manchester and Salford Advertiser.*

A dinner was given to Mr. Cobbett by his Manchester committee, at the Town Hall, Salford, on Monday; and was among the most gratifying ceremonies of the kind that have ever occurred in this town. The company amounted to about 140. The dinner, which was supplied by Mr. Wilde, of the White Lion, at which house the committee generally held their meetings on business, was exceedingly well got up, the viands were of good quality, and very well dressed; and not the least attractive garniture of the table consisted of six quarters of house lamb, which Mr.

Cobbett had had sent from his little farm at Kensington, expressly for this occasion, together with a plentiful supply of fine white broccoli.

But much more gratifying than anything connected with the mere dinner, which was the apology for the meeting, was to see such an assembly gathered together on such an occasion; to see such a company, chiefly of young men, animated by so warm a zeal in so good a cause; to observe the order and decorum of the evening's entertainment, protracted as it was till twelve o'clock, without, as we believe, one solitary instance of inebriety; and to witness the good sense and knowledge displayed by the various speakers. We should be willing to stake the whole of our cause on the comparison between this meeting and its proceedings, and the orgies of any Pitt-club that ever assembled.

The dinner was laid about half-past six o'clock, and Mr. JOHN FIELDEN, of TODMORDEN, took the chair. The table, which was laid in the form of a horse-shoe, was completely filled, and the lower extremities were occupied by the vice-chairmen, Mr. William Croft, of Pendleton, and Mr. William Harvey. We observed also with pleasure the presence at the table of Mr. Joseph Brotherton, Mr. Joseph Johnson, Mr. Edmund Grundy, of Bury; and Messrs. Halliday, Halliwell, and Earnshaw, of Oldham; Mr. Thomas Smith, of Liverpool; and Mr. James and Mr. Thomas Fielden.

After the cloth was removed, the Chairman gave several toasts before he came to the health of Mr. Cobbett, which he prefaced by a speech that filled his hearers with admiration, and of which we here give a mere sketch.

The CHAIRMAN rose and said, that his next duty was to propose to the company the health of a gentleman whose reputation was not to be affected by anything that he could say or leave unsaid—a gentleman, who, during a long course of years, had been the consistent advocate of reform, and who had now the happiness to see converts crowding to join him; who had been the advocate not only of parliamentary reform, but of all those measures of prac-

tical improvement which were bound up with the welfare of the people, and with which his own name was identified; who had been the consistent advocate of just principles of government, in seasons when the people, maddened by a delusive prosperity, thought those principles to be false; but which principles, by the dissipation of that fancied prosperity, were proved to be true. He was not more distinguished, however, for his advocacy of reform in the constitution and practice of Parliament, than for his zealous maintenance of the just rights of the people. The cause of the suffering poor and the oppressed labourer was that which had always lain nearest to his heart; and it was this, above all things, that had raised him in his (the Chairman's) estimation, and in the estimation of all the best friends of their kind. He had not only pointed out the cause of the sufferings of the people, how they originated, and from what they sprung, but he had pointed out, in a manner the most clear and simple, the specific remedy for those grievances. (Hear, hear.) There were a great many men, of the best intentions, who had a just and strong feeling with respect to the actual condition of the working classes, and yet could not be brought to assent to the only means that were adequate to the permanent improvement of their condition. It was that friend, whose name he was about to mention to them, and it was he only who had the skill to trace their sufferings up to their source, in the debt and the exorbitant taxation necessary to sustain the debt, and who had also the courage and the justice and the good sense to recommend the removal of the cause, as the sure and only means of removing the effects which proceeded from it. (Loud cheers.) There were many, indeed, who had their specifics for relieving the distresses of the poor. Of these the first and the strongest was to remove their poverty, by depriving them of the resource which they now had in the *poor-laws*. This surely was one of the wildest schemes that ever proceeded from the lips of man; and more especially might it be deemed so, after what had been recently witnessed in the

South. This scheme could not be carried into effect, even if it could ultimately do good, for it would throw the nation into convulsion. Others hoped to accomplish the same end by giving the people *cheap bread*; and this was to be secured by the *abolition of the corn-laws*. He was one of those who thought the corn-laws should be abolished. But in order to do justice to all parties, we ought to place the growers of corn in England in a condition *to compete on equal terms with the foreigner*; then we might fairly call on the legislature to repeal the corn-laws, and expect our call to be heard. (Loud cheers.) There were others who proposed to remove the calamities of the people, by giving them *an improved system of banking*. (Laughter.) Now, if it could be shown that banking was productive of good to any portion of the community, then the question might be entertained with propriety; but he had never yet been able to discover any good from banking, *except to bankers themselves*; and in his eyes the object of the banker differed in no respect from that of the pensioner, namely, *to live upon the industry of the people without giving them an equivalent*. This was forcibly illustrated by what had occurred to him lately at Halifax, where he was on business recently, when a meeting was held of the proprietors of the joint-stock bank of Halifax. This was a recent but a very successful establishment. He had been once solicited to become a shareholder in this, as he had been in other joint-stock banks, but he declined the overtures, because he was convinced that he *could not accept them with a clear conscience*. A friend who had been at the meeting of the Halifax bank, and who was a share-holder, told him that a dividend had been made of  $12\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. in addition to 5 per cent. voted as a sinking fund to cover future losses, making a total of  $17\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.; he asked *who were the payers of this  $17\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.* His friend replied, "Oh, the joint-stock bank furnishes accommodation to those who furnish labour for the people, and without that aid the commerce of the country could not be carried on." This he

said was no answer to his question, and he still wanted to know *who paid the  $17\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.* "Oh, it was paid by those who received the accommodation." The conversation was carried on till *the payment was traced to the labourers themselves*, who thus paid  $17\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. to keep up a fund for their own employment. (Loud laughter.) It had been said that *an increase of money* was necessary to an *increase of trade*, that the use of the banker was to supply that increase of money; and that to make payments *in promises to pay* was necessary to the commerce of the country. He denied the truth of the proposition; and as facts were the best, he would bring its truth to the test of facts, of which one on such a subject was worth a thousand speculations. Let the inquiry be made in that branch of trade, the cotton trade, with which all around him were familiar. At the close of the last war the consumption of cotton was 6,000 bags per week. During the progress of that war, the Government had formed in loans made in paper-money the means of carrying on that war, as well as of paying the dividends on what was previously contracted; but with the war ceased the system of borrowing by which it was supported, the paper money was diminished in amount, and the country was plunged into suffering and ruin; though that suffering and that ruin were little to the suffering and ruin which had been experienced since PEEL'S BILL came into operation. Now what, during this period, was the progress of the cotton trade? From 1815 to 1824, which latter was the year of Mr. ROBINSON'S *vaunted prosperity*; and during which period there was no question that though we had *a less circulation* than during the war, we had a greater average circulation than we have since had; from 1815 to 1824 the increase in the consumption was from 6,000 to 11,000 bags a week. At the close, then, of 1824 the amount was eleven thousand and some hundred bags a week; a *contraction of the currency* then took place, and lowered prices; and the people were obliged to do more work in order to find the means of pay-

ing the same taxes. From 1824 to 1832 there was a progressive increase in the consumption of raw cotton from 11,000 to 16,000 bags, which was the average weekly consumption during the last year. He thought then that he had thus made out his case, *that an increased trade might be carried on with a diminished quantity of currency; (loud cheers;)* so that it was quite clear that there was no necessity for that accommodation, which consists of the *circulation of promises to pay*, in order to make the people happy and prosperous. Another of the specifics of the political economists, was *free trade*. One would think that there was *already trade enough to satisfy the most sanguine* of these speculators; and that it was not an increase of trade that could relieve us, while pressed as we are to the earth by burdens. He had already shown that the cotton trade had increased, from 1824 to 1832, from 11,000 to 16,000 bags a week; in the last year the consumption was *higher than it had ever been before* in the history of the cotton trade; and never was there a period, he appealed to all around him, in which there was more *suffering among the working men, more difficulties and distresses among the employers*, than during that year. FREE TRADE could confer, was expected to confer, no benefit, but *an extension of trade*; here was *an extension of trade*, and *an increase of suffering going hand in hand*; here was an extension of trade increasing the suffering; and the increase of suffering urging to *an additional extension of trade*; and yet *free trade* was expected to relieve us! He was thus convinced that all the specifics and panaceas propounded by the political economists, were only calculated to delay the period, without weakening the necessity for the adoption of that grand measure which originated with their distinguished friend. *(Loud cheers.)* He did not deny others the freedom of opinion which he wished to exercise; but he could not agree that any of the expedients on which he had commented, or any other expedient, could enable us to *sustain the debt*; and when he knew the inefficacy of palliatives, and saw a remedy pro-

posed which struck at the root of all the evils we complained of, that was the remedy which he would advocate. This was the remedy which Mr. Cobbett had proposed, and which he had shown to be just, and consistent with the rights of the community, namely, the destruction of the debt. *(Loud cheers.)* This measure would relieve the poor by removing the demands on their wages; it would relieve them by relieving the farmer from burdensome taxation, and *removing the necessity for the corn-laws*; it would relieve them by *removing the system of credit and the banker's profits upon it*. The means of the people would be increased by the same process, and with their means their consumption; *and our home trade would find us an ample market for all our commodities*. He was not accustomed to meetings of this kind; still less to occupy so conspicuous a position in them. He was placed in that chair, not by inclination or choice, but a sense of duty, and a wish to manifest the respect which he felt for Mr. Cobbett, and which he owed to him. He begged to propose, "*Our distinguished guest, William Cobbett, and may he live to complete that economical reform which he has so long and so nobly advocated.*"

Mr. COBBETT returned thanks, and proposed prosperity to the industrious town of Manchester.

## MANCHESTER LECTURES.

### LECTURE IV.

29th December, 1831.

GENTLEMEN,

I AM this evening to submit to you the reasons on which I found my propositions with regard to the DEBT, commonly called the NATIONAL DEBT, and also with regard to an adjustment of pecuniary contracts between man and man. And here, gentlemen, I shall stand in need of all that indulgence which you have hitherto so largely bestowed upon me; for the subject is intricate in itself, and I have to encounter all the obstacles that prejudice, bred and fostered by a long series of misrepresentations

and calumnies, has placed in my way. Nevertheless, favoured by your patient and indulgent attention, I believe myself able to satisfy you, not only of the necessity, but also of the justice of the measures which I recommend, with regard to this most important branch of our national affairs. First, however, permit me to read those of my propositions which relate to it.

6. To cease, during the first six months after June, 1882, to pay interest on a fourth part of the debt; second six months, to cease to pay interest on another fourth; and so on for the other two fourths; so that no more interest, or any part of the debt, would be paid after the end of two years.
7. To divide the proceeds of all the property mentioned in paragraph No. 5, and also in paragraph No. 2, in due proportion, on principles of equity, amongst the owners of what is called *stock*, or, in other words, the *fundholders*, or persons who lent their money to those who borrowed it in virtue of acts of the late parliaments, and to give to the fundholders, out of the taxes, nothing beyond these proceeds.
8. To make an equitable adjustment with respect to the pecuniary contracts between man and man, and thereby rectify, as far as practicable, the wrongs and ruin inflicted on thousands upon thousands of virtuous families by the arbitrary changes made by acts of the late parliaments, in the value of the money of the country.

These propositions, or anything amounting to the same, or having the same object in view, have been called by all manner of vile names, such as are usually applied to the most flagitious acts of dishonesty. *Robbery* has never failed to be used for this purpose; and I have been frequently called a rogue, for barely mooted the proposition. This, however, has not deterred me from repeating it, as often as occasion has called for it, from the year 1803 to the present day. When I was in America the first time, I was a mere zealous prater of politics. Finding the whole of the peo-

ple railing against my own country, I espoused its cause, right or wrong; and the Bank having stopped payment in 1797, I defended bank-notes not convertible into gold, it being quite sufficient for me that England had bank-notes. But I had not been in England three years, before I clearly saw the wickedness and the mischievous tendency of the whole system of debts and paper-money. So that these are no new notions of mine, at any rate, I having continued to promulgate them for twenty-eight years, in spite of all the shafts of ridicule, and all the venom of calumny. In 1806, when the Whigs and the Grenvillites came into power, and in the bringing in of whom I had a great hand, I might have been under-secretary of state to Mr. Windham, who was then secretary of state for the colonies; but he having laughed at me, when I mentioned, as a condition, that *the interest of the debt should be reduced*, and that Freeling should not be turned out of the Post-office, I made up my mind to have nothing to do with the matter; being quite sure, as I told him, that the Ministry never could remain in power for any length of time, unless the undermining vermin of Pitt and Dundas were swept out of the offices; and that, which was still more material, shame and disgrace must finally fall upon all those who attempted to carry on the affairs of the country, loaded as it was with the National Debt; and that debt, observe, taking the difference in the value of money into consideration, was not then half so great as it is now. These opinions, then, are not new with me—taken up for this occasion, and put forth for the purpose of ingratiating myself with any part of the people, who now feel themselves pressed to the earth by that debt.

If the Reform Bill do not lighten the burdens of the people, it is agreed, on all hands, that the bill will be of no use. We all agree, except BABINGTON MACAULAY perhaps, that unless the Reform Bill lead to measures of *relief*; unless it lead to a great taking off of taxes, it will be a mere mockery of the people; and that, like *Catholic emancipation*, it will make things worse than they were

before. Catholic emancipation, instead of content and tranquillity, has already been followed by *almost* a revolution in Ireland; and such will be the case with regard to reform in England, unless it be immediately followed by such a reduction of taxes as shall be sensibly felt by every part of the community, down to the very lowest of the labourers. When I come to speak of Ireland more particularly, I shall not only show that the present state of things was naturally to be expected to follow the Emancipation Bill, but that it was foreseen, and foretold by me in most distinct terms, even while the Emancipation Bill was before the Parliament. I may now, then, be excused for presuming to predict, that the Reform Bill will be followed by similar consequences in England, unless it lead to great changes in the management of our affairs, and especially unless it lead to a great reduction of the taxes. This is natural; for the nation wants the reform, because it is over-burdened: it has great hopes and expectations from this reform; and we all know what are the invariable consequences of sanguine expectation disappointed. The labourer, who is discontented at having nothing but potatoes, when he ought to have bacon and bread, will not feel satisfied with those potatoes, upon merely being told that he has now got *reform*.

To this we come, then; without a great lightening of our burdens, the reform will be a mere mockery; a temporary delusion, and a permanent addition to the grounds of discontent. The next thing then to be considered is, how this lightening of the burdens of the people is to take place; and every one must answer, that it cannot take place at all, and that it is an abuse of words to talk of it, unless there be an alienation of the debt. When you hear men talk of retrenchment and economy, as you will hear Babington Macaulay, and others, and all the school of Brougham, and all the Whigs themselves, who are in power, and hear them at the same time declare their firm resolution not to touch the interest of the debt; declare that *national faith*, as they call it, must be kept sacred, though, by-the-by, their *national*

*faith* means a most infamous plundering of the nation; when you hear men talk thus, set them down as hypocrites or madmen; for how is relief to come, except by a ceasing to pay interest on the debt?

Gentlemen, there are none of you, I am certain, crazy enough to suppose that the Ministers can pay this interest out of their own pockets; if you wish it to be paid, you must wish yourselves to pay it; and if you wish this, there can be no diminution of our burdens; and the state vessel must go on, blundering about among the rocks, till it goes to pieces. The case stands thus: The total clear amount of the revenue, after paying charges of collection and management, and all sorts of things, is stated by the Government to be forty-seven millions. This may be true, to be sure; but I make it a rule never to believe any of their statements or returns. It may, however, be true, and we will take them upon their own showing. The expenses of collection, together with other innumerable charges, direct and indirect, over and above this clear revenue, would still bring the gross amount, squeezed out of the people, to sixty millions; but, at any rate, it would bring it to fifty-six. Now, then, out of the forty-seven millions, thirty are taken for paying the dividends upon the debt, and paying the charges of all sorts relative to the debt. We must give the debt, half at least, of the expenses and charges attending the collection and management of the revenue; and that makes its annual cost thirty-four millions and one-half. This is still far from being all that it costs; for out of the debt grows the necessity of this thundering standing army in time of peace. The debt causes the heavy taxes; these cause distress; distress causes discontent; violent discontent creates threatened commotion; and then it becomes the duty of the Government to have a force at hand to put down commotion. To cry out, therefore, against the standing army being kept up in time of peace; to inveigh against oppressive taxation, and to complain of distress and suffering, and starvation even, is to be stupidly unjust, as long as you keep up the idiot-like cry of *national faith*.

Thus much, then, for the plea of *necessity*; and though Milton has called that the tyrant's plea, it is only the tyrant's plea when it is false. In this case it is true; and it is, in fact, the plea of industry and want against all-devouring usury. But, now, for the *justice* of the propositions, even if we were to leave this plea of necessity out of the question. This robbery, as it is called, is really no more than imitating the practice of the wisest and most just of mankind. Many of you, gentlemen, well know, that when Solon became lawgiver of Athens, he found that ancient and famous republic in a state of utter confusion and destitution; he found it unable to make war against its enemies, unable to defend itself; and he found besides, that all the active and industrious persons in the community were ground down into a state of beggary and ruin by the *usurers*, who had made a great part of the people in a great measure their actual slaves. Rome was in a similar state, and from a similar cause in the time of Julius Cæsar. Both of them resorted to an adjustment which freed the people from the claws of the usurers, by making these latter in some cases take a part of their demand, and in other cases relinquish the whole. But not to mention the kings of France, who repeatedly paid off the debts of the state by lopping off, directly or indirectly, the amount of the demands of its creditors; not to mention these, who effected their purposes by clippings of the coins, and by other tricks, upon an equality, in point of baseness, with the tricks that have been played here to lower and to raise, and to lower and to raise again, the value of money; not to cite the example of these *grand* and shuffling *monarques*, let us come to our brethren across the Atlantic, who, having borrowed money to an enormous extent, for the purpose of effecting that "glorious revolution" which, until it had succeeded, we used to call "a foul and unnatural rebellion;" having borrowed of all sorts of people, of all ages and all sexes, an enormous sum of money for this holy, or, as it would have been, *unholy* purpose; and having effected that purpose, never paid one single farthing,

principal or interest, of the borrowed money. It would have been a jest, indeed, to have made a revolution in the name of liberty, and to have ended it by making all the people slaves to the usurers. But let us come to our own countrymen, and hear what illustrious persons amongst them have said upon the subject; and that our authorities may be as high and undoubted as possible, let us go in amongst the Ministers themselves, where, sitting with the King himself in council; not the Birmingham council; but the real London council; and not the council from which Sir F. Burdett absconded; but the real King and council, who sit at Whitehall, with Bathurst for their clerk, though crammed in by the Tories, and kept in by the Whigs: let us go into that council which my Lord Coke describes as "an honourable, noble, and *reverend*" assembly; let us go in among these *reverend* persons, and clap our hand upon the shoulder of Sir James Graham of Netherby, a member, too, in another place of the "*noblest assembly of freemen in the world*;" and let us pull out his pamphlet of 1827, and therein let us read a distinct, a most unequivocal proposition, to deduct *thirty per cent.* from the interest of the fundholders. Only one-third; but we may ask Sir James, reverend as he is, upon what principle it is that he would take thirty per cent., other than that principle which would apply to the taking of the whole?

I have another authority to quote, which, though not of a very *reverend* character, I must confess, is pretty nearly as good as the last; and that is Mr. BAINES's, the editor of the *Leeds Mercury*; who, if he have not bestowed upon me every term and epithet of abuse contained in the English language, for having proposed a reduction of the interest of this debt; if he have not done this, it has certainly been for want of being sufficiently conversant with those terms and epithets; and, therefore, speaking conscientiously, I take the will for the deed. After all this abuse, however, this very Mr. Baines now tells us it is "still doubtful whether the middle and lower classes will not find themselves oppressed by the

"weight of taxation, and whether it may not ultimately be necessary that persons of property, both landowners, merchants, fundholders, and others, as well in the church as in the state, should make a general contribution, to extinguish a large portion of the National Debt; that mountain which Mr. Pitt and his followers raised to so gigantic a magnitude, and which over-lays and oppresses the country." Of this scheme for *lightening the burdens* of the landowners, merchants, manufacturers, and others, to pay the *principal* instead of the *interest* of the debt, I will speak by-and-by, when I shall have to notice the observations of a literary brother of Mr. BAINES, who seems to have come to the same conclusion upon much about the same premises. But here, at any rate, we have Mr. BAINES, the great oracle of the North, and as famous and for the same reasons as oracles generally are; here we have this famous Mr. BAINES acknowledging that we cannot have relief, without a paying off of the debt; and observe well, proposing at the same time, to make the fundholders *contribute towards paying off themselves*. From this oracular suggestion let us come, if it be robbery to take the interest from the fundholders; let us not amuse ourselves with these small game, but let us come to the robbers upon a grand scale; namely, those who propose to make new emissions of paper of some sort or other. Sir Henry Parnell, and all the Scotch tribe of political economists; all the Scotch bankers, and Mr. Maberly amongst the rest, whom the Scotch have always pointed out for many years past as a profound financier: all this tribe, who propose joint-stock banking companies; and who always propose to make the paper-money a legal tender, or, whether they be divided as to this latter point or not, all propose to make prices higher than they now are, by the means of this paper. Of course, then, they propose to *lower the value of money*; of course, they propose to deduct in a base and fraudulent manner, from the interest of the debt. At any rate, they are either mad or they must intend to give the fundholder *less than he now receives*; and if they intend to give him

less than he now receives, they intend, to use their own stupid phraseology, to commit a breach of national faith and to rob the fundholder; and if they do not intend to give him less than he now receives, how can the measures which they propose lighten the burdens of the tax-payer? Supposing the act to be unjust in itself, the only difference between their proposition and mine is, that mine is taking by open and undisguised force, while theirs is theft or private stealing. Our different modes of proceeding serve to mark our different motives: mine may, at any rate, be sincere and honest; but theirs must be in its nature *furtive*. The sly manner in which they are foolish enough to believe they can effect it, would in any court of justice in the world be a proof of the furtive intention; that is to say, the thievish intention arising from a roguish mind. Mr. Attwood's scheme, which has many partisans, though paper be one of its ingredients, is open and honest; for he says, and he says truly, that owing to Peel's bill, and the various other tricks of our at once bungling and bragging Government, the fundholders, the mortgagees, and other usurers, are now receiving twice or thrice as much as they ought to receive; that they ought to be compelled by law to receive less; and a paper-money ought to be made, and they ought to be made to receive it, which paper-money would be worth a great deal less than the King's coin pound for pound. In all but the remedy I perfectly agree with Mr. Attwood, who is a man of great talent, and whose brother, the Member of the House of Commons, has shown more sense and more virtue (except in his opposition to the Reform Bill) than all the whole crew of Ministers and Ministers' underlings, who have been upon the stage during the whole of the twenty-eight years that I have been knocking their heads one against the other, and, finding no sense in them, have finally been dragging them in the dirt. I differ with the Attwoods as to the remedy; because, in the first place, it would violate all recent contracts; because I know it would enable me to rob my yearly servants of one-half of their

yearly wages; because I know that it would give like ability to all other employers; because I know that it would rob English, Scotch, and Irish merchants and manufacturers of half the debts due to them abroad; because I know that the mortgagee who lent his real gold upon an estate, would be paid off in paper not worth half the money, and so with regard to recent marriage settlements, rent charges, annuities, and every contract and stipulation for time; but secondly, and of more weight than all the other considerations put together, because the Attwood remedy might by some chance or other, prolong the existence of the debt, and of that truly infernal gamble carried on in London, called the Stock Exchange; rather than not see the destruction of which, I would behold and endure my share of any possible evil that could afflict us.

Now, then, there is no scheme for lightening the burdens of the country, which does not amount to what my opponents designate a robbery; so that I am not singular in this respect. All agree to take away something: we only differ as to the manner of the taking. But I deny that it is robbery, in any of its shapes or forms; I deny that the nation owes the fundholders anything at all; I deny their claim to a single farthing from the nation; and, when I propose to take the church-property and crown estates, for the purpose of giving the proceeds to the fundholders, it is not a proposition founded on an opinion of mine, that they have a *right* to demand anything; but founded in the right of the nation to dispose of certain property that it possesses, and which is now of no use to it, and which it in policy ought to bestow on that part of the fundholders, who would be totally ruined, unless this relief were afforded them; and especially that part of them who may have been compelled, against their expressed will, to have their property deposited in the funds. This is the principle upon which I would give the fundholders anything at all, they having, in point of right, no claim upon the nation whatsoever.

No nation, supposing the whole nation to have been the borrowers, has a right to burden its posterity. I might stop

here to show, and I easily could show, that it was those, whom the present Ministers have accused of having usurped the legislative rights of the people, who borrowed the money. I might insist upon, and prove it most clearly, that it was not *the nation* that borrowed the money; but, grant that it was, what right had your fathers to load you with this intolerable debt? What would be said of a law that should compel the children to pay the debts of the father, he having left them nothing wherewith to pay? Of a law that should make the children work all the days of their lives, to clear off the score run up by a drunken and profligate father? Of a law which should say to the father, Spend away, run in debt, keep on borrowing, close your eyes in the midst of drunkenness and gluttony; imitate the frequenters of Bellamy's all your life; and your children, and children's children, shall be slaves to pay Bellamy and others with whom you have run up the score? Would not the makers of such a law be held in everlasting execration?

And in what respect does this case differ from that of a prodigal and borrowing nation? "Oh!" say the advocates of the Jews, "the difference is very great; for the nation borrows money to defend itself against an enemy, which defence it could not effect without this borrowing of money." I might stop here, and flatly deny that one penny of this money was ever borrowed for that purpose; for it is notorious that it was almost all borrowed for the purpose of carrying on one war to force unjust taxation on the American colonies, and another war to force back the Bourbons upon France, and thereby prevent the overthrow of borough-mongering in England. This is perfectly notorious; but I will not disfigure my argument by any reliance upon it. Let it be admitted that the money was borrowed for the purpose of defending the country; and then I ask, what right your fathers had to *purchase* ease and safety, and to leave you to pay the debt? What right should we of the present day have to throw upon our children the burden of defending ourselves? If we be in danger, we are to come forth in

our persons, or by our purses, for our own defence. By the very argument of our opponents, the resources of the country are the great means, if not the only means, of its security; what right have we, then, to anticipate these resources? What right have we to take beforehand the means of security from our children?

Gentlemen, not another word need be said with regard to the right of mortgaging the strength of the child in the cradle; not another word need be said about the want of the right in a nation to burden posterity, and very little is it necessary to say about the right of the lender to demand a liquidation of the burden. For, if there existed no right in the borrower to make the loan, what right can there be in the lender to demand repayment? This latter knew who it was to whom he was lending, and he knew also the base and dishonest intentions of the borrower to throw the debt upon posterity. If in consequence of the unjust and cruel law, which I have before supposed, to make children pay the debts of the father, he leaving them nothing wherewith to pay; if, in that case, a lender were basely to administer to the father's profligate extravagance, would not the world call him monster when he came to grind the children to death for repayment of the loan? Yet, in what respect would he be more detestable than the atrocious Jews, whether calling themselves Christians or not, who now come and demand from us the pound of flesh in virtue of their bond? In the affairs of individuals, the law knows of no such anticipation as this. The law not only will not allow the children to be answerable for the debts of the father, but will not allow them to be answerable for their *own debts*, contracted before they arrive at the age of maturity. And why is this? They are not answerable for the debts, because the law considers them as incapable of *giving their assent* to them. How then can you be answerable for these debts, the greater part of which was contracted before scarcely ten men here assembled were twenty-one years of age?

Not one farthing, therefore, of these debts is due from you to the fundholders.

The great advocate of the abominable Jews, the editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, resorts to a couple of curious arguments in defence of their claims; the first of which is this: that the nation having "*suffered*" the Government to borrow the money, or rather to make the loan (for it was not *money*); the nation having *suffered* the Government to do this, is bound to pay the debt. So that here is a Government, with an army, with all the means of compelling the nation to submit to what it pleases; to resist its will is treason; and the Jew, who comes and lends money to this Government, is to come, when the people have got the power of altering the law which enabled the Government to do this, and tell them; the blaspheming Jew is to come, and tell them that they are bound in conscience to pay back the money that he lent for the purpose of keeping them down, and to threaten to have them crucified, if they hold back a farthing of his demand. But, gentlemen, even if we were to admit this, monstrous as it is, it would not come up to the purpose of our opponents. For, if the nation ought not to have *suffered* the Government to borrow the money, and if it assumed responsibility for this loan, in consequence of suffering it to be made, it must be the nation that was *then alive*; and how are you, who were not then born, or at most were infants, to be held responsible for payment, because you did not prevent the Government from borrowing the money?

The other argument of this new disciple of the synagogue; this new child and champion of the hell called the Stock Exchange, is this: that if an invading enemy besiege a town, and demand a *ransom* to spare it from being abandoned to the soldiery, and a sum of money be borrowed to pay the ransom, and thus save the town, the people of the town are bound all to contribute according to their means to repay the money thus borrowed. Certainly, Rabbi, nothing more just, but, then, it is the people *then alive*, that are to repay the ransom; and this is precisely my argument, not only did no man living ever hear of the repayment of such a ransom being thrown upon

the posterity of a town, but the thing cannot be, for mankind have never yet heard of a law to tax people for such repayment; and if such law were to be passed, if any lawgivers of a town were equally foolish with the lawgivers of this nation, the people would avoid the tax by abandoning the town, as they are now abandoning England to the amount of *ten millions a year* of rents and income, in order to avoid paying their share of this unjust burden called the debt. And this is one great evil of the thing. All the world acknowledges what dreadful evils have fallen upon Ireland in consequence of the absentees not expending their revenues in the country. How many projects have we heard, and sometimes even in Parliament, for taxing the property of absentees at a higher rate than that of other people! Base indeed it is, that those who live on the taxes, and particularly those who live on the tithes; shameful it is in them to carry their revenues out of the country. Sorrowful it is to see men going off with their wealth to the United States of America; but while in the former instance there are no means of prevention, in the latter instance there is neither prevention nor ground of blame. Men flee from unjust pressure; they flee from a law that compels them to pay the debts of their fathers; and flee they will, as long as that law shall exist. I am, therefore, for putting an end for ever to this unjust law, and for the doing of which I have, I think, produced much more than argument sufficient. But I must not dismiss the subject without asking a little, what, after all, would *really be due* to these fundholders if we were for argument's sake to admit that they had a claim to anything at all? The sum is stated in its most modest amount, at eight hundred millions. It would not be right to have an appearance of boldness in addressing persons who are worth eight hundred millions of money, but one might just ask them **WHERE THEY GOT THE MONEY?** Where did you get it, gentlemen and ladies? There are a good many of you, to be sure, but you have lent more money here than there now is, or ever was, in the whole world; more pounds of

gold and silver than ever came out of the mines. It amounts to more than the whole of the kingdom, lands, houses, mines, and woods, would sell for, if put up to auction, and if foreigners could bring gold and silver into the country, and purchase them. There must be some great mistake then. It is physically impossible that you can have lent this money.

Gentlemen, it has all been a jugglery from the beginning to the end. A loan-monger, or the maker of a loan, has never lent any money at all. He has written his name upon bits of paper; these he has distributed about in sales to under loan-mongers; these have been turned into other bits of paper; and these bits of paper the Government have paid away. I cannot adopt a better mode of explaining this matter than by describing to you a transaction by the means of which I was once likely to become a loan-monger myself, and which first opened my eyes with regard to this matter. When I came home from America, in the year 1800, I was looked upon by the Government people as likely to become one of their vigorous partisans. It was the custom in those glorious times of Pitt and paper, to give to the literary partisans of the Government what were called "*slices*" of a loan. For instance, Moses was the loanmonger; and, as the *scrip*, as it used to be called, was always directly at a *premium*, a bargain was always made with the loan-monger that he should admit certain favourites of the Government to have certain portions of scrip, at the same price that he gave for it; I was offered such portion of *scrip*, which, as I was told, would put a hundred pounds or two into my pocket at once. I was frightened at the idea of becoming responsible for the immense sum, upon which this would be the profit. But I soon found that the *scrip* was never even to be shown to me, and that I had merely to pocket the amount of the *premium*. I positively refused to have anything to do with the matter, for which I got heartily laughed at. But this was of great utility to me; it opened my eyes with regard to the nature of these transactions; it set me to work to un-

derstand all about the debt and the funds and the scrip and the stock and everything belonging to it. At every step I found the thing more and more black, and more and more execrable; and it soon brought my mind to a conclusion, that the system was what *the accursed thing* was in the camp of the Israelites, and that the nation never could be happy again until it was got rid of; in which opinion I have remained from that day to this.

Now, if I had pocketed this money, it must have come out of the estates, skill, and labour, of the people. I should have been a robber indeed; this would have been real robbery, and a great deal more worthy of the gallows than the forging of a bank-note, or the stealing of a sheep. From this, gentlemen, you may judge what loan-making was. If I did not get the hundred pounds or two, somebody else did; and we have had to pay interest and compound interest upon it, from that day to this. I should have thus taken from the nation enough to support four or five labourers and their families, for one year at any rate; and, if I had taken it, and had bought stock with it, as it is called, would it not have been right to pay me with a halter, instead of paying me in money? If certain proprietors of newspapers, whom I could name, were brought to a strict account, what, good God! are the sums which they have got in this way! How soon they would come tumbling from their chariots, and lie by the wayside, food for kites and carrion-crows, unless, out of pure benevolence, taken up by the grave-robbers and Burkers, and carried, "for the benefit of science," to the humane Mr. Warburton's schools of anatomy!

Well, then, wholly unable to account, upon principles of either natural philosophy or arithmetic, how these gentlemen and ladies came by the 800 millions to lend to the nation, let us leave that, as a matter for posterity to handle, we ourselves taking care to leave them nothing else belonging to the debt, and let us now proceed to inquire what, even according to their own showing, is really due to these "public creditors," as they impudently call themselves. The far

greater part of the money, *if it were* money, was borrowed (if a transaction such as I have just described can be called borrowing) when, according to the showing of the Parliament itself, a pound of the currency was not worth more than fourteen shillings of the present money. This was the statement of the bullion report of 1810. VANSITTART made the house negative the fact; but the fact was revised and ratified in 1819 by that very same house. So that, upon their own showing, we are paying interest upon a pound, instead of interest upon fourteen shillings. That, however, is not the true view of the matter. The bullion committee took a wrong standard or criterion. The true standard was the bushel of wheat; and it is perfectly notorious that the average price of that article, during the time that the loans were making, was more than double what it has been, on an average, during the last sixteen or seventeen years. So that, at the very least, we are paying in interest double the sum that we ought to pay. The debt, if debt it ought to be called, was contracted in depreciated money; and we are compelled to pay in money of full value. This has been effected too by acts of that Parliament whose business it was to take care of our interests; and now, when we demand that this grievous wrong should be put an end to, we are accused of wishing for a breach of the national faith. *Faith* in such a case means *honest dealing*; and has not faith been due to the nation? Are the Jews the only people in the world towards whom there is to be honesty of dealing? During the time that the chief part of the money was lent, the price of wheat was, on an average, fifteen shillings the bushel; the ruinous bill of PEELE brought it down, at one time, to four shillings the bushel. Thus were all the rest of the nation robbed for the benefit of a band of Jews and jobbers; thus were the resources of the country poured into their laps, that they might lend them again to Spaniards, Portuguese, South Americans, Austrians, Prussians, and Russians. In short, the whole thing seems to have been invented for the purpose of reducing the people of this kingdom to beggary.

It has been surprising to every one who has paid attention to the matter, that the present Ministers tolerate in PEEL the audacity which they do tolerate. What! is the possession of a million or two of money, to make it safe for him to stand up and talk in the tone of a Solon, while every tongue ought to exclaim, "Is this man not to be brought to account for the destructive bill of which he was the author; are those really representatives of the people, who can sit and hear him opposing a reform of that Parliament which sanctioned his destructive bill?" Is it possible that men can sit and hear this language from him, and not remind him that he has done more mischief to his country than ever was inflicted upon it by any other man for a thousand years past? Is it possible that the people can deem those their representatives, who have not the spirit, or who want the understanding, to place in a proper light the conduct of this man?

Let us now look a little into another matter connected with this debt. We have seen that it has no valid foundation as a charge against the present nation: we have seen that it is not our debt at all; and if it were, we have seen that we are paying more than double the amount of interest due. Mr. Mushett, of the Mint, a great stickler for the fundholders, at the close of his voluminous calculations, admitted that the fundholders had sometimes lost and sometimes gained by the changes in the value of money; but that, up to the year 1820, they and the nation were *even*; so that, according to this decision of their advocate, we have been now for eleven years paying them two for one; so that, upon this view of the matter, we might now be free from all interest for *eleven years* at any rate; and, at the end of the eleven years, the nation might, *if it chose*, begin to pay interest again. However, I deny the claim altogether; and to strengthen, if anything were necessary to strengthen, my argument in support of this denial, let us look at the *security* which the lenders took when they lent the money; for, observe, this is a very material consideration, and will be found to involve results of the greatest importance.

When a man lends money, he knows, or ought to know, the sufficiency of the borrower. He ought to know what security he has. In the case of a mortgage, rent-charge, annuity, he has the land or house as security. In the case of money lent on bond, in other manner, he has the goods and chattels, and, after all, the person of the party; but what security did these loan-mongers take? It is the common talk with them, that they have a mortgage upon all the lands and houses and other real property in the kingdom. Let them, then, produce the deed and the bond. They can do no such thing. They have no deed and no bond, and they have no mortgage upon anything. Their security consists solely of an act of Parliament, or acts of Parliament, which are properly called *loan acts*; and a loan act is of this nature: the Government contracts a loan with a loan-monger; and an act of Parliament is passed, to provide that the interest of the loan shall be regularly paid, without any deduction, out of the proceeds of the *consolidated fund*. Now, then, what is this fund? The fundholders, and particularly the ladies, have an idea, natural enough, that this fund consists of a monstrous heap of gold and silver money, kept somewhere or other, under the guard and protection of the Government or the bank. I beg leave to assure the ladies that there is not any such heap of money, or any heap at all, or any chest, or box, or receptacle for the gold and silver; but that the *consolidated fund* means the clear proceeds of the taxes that the Ministers are able annually to squeeze out of us: that these taxes are paid into the bank when collected; that out of them the bank pays the interest to the fundholders half-yearly; and that, if the taxes in the hands of the bank be not sufficient to pay the half-yearly interest, which is frequently the case, the bank *lends the Government enough to make up the deficiency*; that is to say, makes some of its bank-notes, and lends them to the Government; and for the bank-notes thus lent, *we have to pay the interest*. Now, gentlemen, did the world ever hear of such a thing as this before?

However, here we have a clear idea of the nature of the security; and a very

consolatory appearance it has to the ladies who do us the honour to lend us money; for, though it does not actually come up to the beautiful scriptural idea of the "*munition of rocks*," it at any rate takes a very wide spread; and really is good as long as the loan acts shall continue in full force. *Consolidated fund* is a very imposing phrase; but still it consists only of words, and conveys no idea of anything fixed to the earth; in short, a loan-bill is the fundholder's contract; it gives him a claim upon the taxes annually collected; it gives him no other claim, and if the taxes be not collected, he has no claim at all; which brings us directly to a very important matter closely connected with the subject of parliamentary reform; seeing that every man in his senses deems the reform to be of no use at all unless it produce a great diminution of the taxes, which, in other words, seems, at the very least, a great diminution of the security of the fundholder. And yet, is any one of you, gentlemen, prepared to say that no taxes ought to be taken off; and are you prepared to say that the Corn-bill ought to continue in order to prevent this security from being diminished?

When the bank stopped payment in gold in 1797, one of the arguments urged against the measure, or rather one of the complaints against Pitt, for having reduced the bank to the necessity of stopping, was this: that amongst other things, it would be a *fraud* upon the fundholders, a *robbery* of the fundholders, because it put forth a depreciated and compulsory paper instead of the King's coin, and thereby did, in fact, violate all the loan-bills by compelling the fundholders to take less than the loan-bills had stipulated for. The answer of Pitt was, that it was a case of *necessity*, and that it was the duty of the Government to preserve the country even if it did cause some loss to the fundholders. Pushed hard on the other side, the then Solicitor-General, Sir John Mitford, since Lord Redesdale, rose, and, as a lawyer, said that there was no wrong done to the fundholder; that he lent his money with the knowledge of the *risk* that he ran; that he received an interest *proportioned to the risk*; that the nation

was not bound to secure him against all risk; that many persons in the kingdom had a claim *prior* to that of the fundholder; that the soldier and the sailor had a *prior* claim; and he asked if any one would assert that the King himself had not a *prior* claim. There was no answer to this argument *then*; and who is to find an answer to it now? And is it not as clearly a case of necessity *now* as it was *then*?

Thus, then, we see that the interest can be lowered, and that the whole can be withheld without any real violation of the contract. But to come closer to our own affair; if we cannot withhold the interest without breach of national faith, how can we without breach of that faith diminish the security for paying it? We have seen that the source of payment is the annual produce of what is called the consolidated fund, and that means the taxes; and has not the security been diminished then by the repeal of the salt tax, the beer tax, the candle tax, and the numerous customs and taxes, which have been recently taken off? Has not the security been diminished by reducing the proceeds of the consolidated fund from a clear fifty-four millions a year to a clear forty-seven millions a year?\*

And will the security not be further reduced, when the *malt tax* shall be taken off? And do you, gentlemen, imagine that the malt tax can remain

\* We learn from the newspapers published since this lecture was delivered, that this *consolidated fund*, if we believe the Government statements, has fallen down to forty-two millions a year. I repeat, that I never place faith in any of these statements of the Government, having so many times proved them to be false; but there must be something in this new story; and I shall be very glad to find that this is a true account; having always regarded that argument which deduces a proof of the prosperity of the country from the great amount of money squeezed from it by the tax-gatherer, as the most stupid effusion of human folly and impudence. If this account be true, it shows that we are got to the end of the tether; that taxation has run its race, and that a new sort of career must be adopted. I am disposed to believe, however, that this is the case; namely, that Lord Grey has not found himself capable to adopt the tricks so long in practice at the treasury; that we have now a true account; and that the truth would have been kept from our sight, if the old stagers had still been at the treasury.

on many months after a reformed Parliament shall assemble? I am aware that you in the north here are not fond of ale, particularly if it be strong, and require much malt in the making; but after long and attentive observation, I can most positively assure you that the thing is quite otherwise in the south, and the west, and the east; and that the very first thing that the chopsticks expect, as the consequence of a reform of the Parliament, is a repeal of that tax, which, taking the necessary monopoly into view, makes ale five-pence or six-pence a pot, where it would not be more than one penny or three halfpence. Without a repeal of this tax, as one of its first consequences, the Reform Bill is not worth a straw; and if it be repealed, mark well what it does: the tax itself, including that on the hops, which must be repealed also, amounts annually to about four millions and a half. But, observe, this is a small part of what it does in the way of injury to the people. Barley is at this time about 4s. a bushel, or rather less. A bushel of barley makes a bushel of malt, and the increase pays for the malting, and if there were no tax, gentlemen as well as farmers, all over the country, would make the malt themselves; and then, all things considered, the malt would not on an average cost them more than 3s. a bushel at this time; because all the marketing expenses would be saved, and because unmarketable barley would frequently be turned into malt. Formerly, in every considerable parish, there was a malt-house attached to the parsonage, and the priest was maltster for the poor, as well as guardian of their souls; but this was in the dark ages; and we who now live in the light cannot expect to enjoy this adventitious benefit of darkness. But, at anyrate, if the malt tax were repealed, we should now have malt at 3s. a bushel. The tax is 2s. 6d. on the bushel of malt, upon the increase as well as upon the barley, so that this brings the malt (the barley being 4s. a bushel) to 6s. 6d. a bushel; but I pay at this time 9s. 6d. for a bushel of malt! The maltster charges the 3s. a bushel, besides the increase, in virtue of the monopoly which the tax gives him. He is obliged

to have a large building; he is obliged to submit to a restriction and superintendence extremely injurious to his business; he is compelled to have a large capital to make advances in the payment of the tax, in order that he may have a stock of malt by him, being compelled to make in winter that which is used in summer, the summer not being a season for the making of malt; he is compelled to submit to regulations which frequently cause him losses that take away a great part of his profits; and he is continually exposed to the risk of severe punishment for deviating in the smallest degree from these minute and vexatious regulations; so that this trade, which rarely ought to exist at all, is far from being a trade of profit; and the result is, that I now pay *nine shillings and sixpence* for a bushel of malt, instead of the *three shillings and sixpence* which I should pay if there were no tax upon it. The moral effects are still more injurious. The working people are driven from their own houses to the ale-house. And as "evil communications corrupt good manners," these are become, not places for taking refreshment, but scenes of drunkenness and of profligacy of every description: and all this the landowners of England have been base enough to suffer, at the same time that they have been incessantly hardening the laws wherever they bear upon the working people.

And shall not this enormous evil be removed? Will you so use your franchise as to send men to Parliament to support this curse of the country? Will you send men thither to prohibit the farmer and his men from turning into drink the produce of their fields? If you will, a Reform of the Parliament will be a source of shame instead of triumph to you. Much better remain as you are, in quiet submission to this tax, instead of sharing in the disgrace of upholding it. Yet if this tax be taken off, what becomes of the security for paying the interest of the debt? The tax on malt and hops may, as I said before, be four millions and a half a year; but, mark well, the repeal of the malt and hop tax will virtually repeal

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nine-tenths of the spirit tax ; also nine-tenths of the tea and the coffee tax ; a large part of the sugar tax ; for it is against all reason to believe that the tea and coffee slops will remain in vogue amongst the millions of working people, when they can have a pot of good ale for a penny or three halfpence. A very great part of the wine tax would come off too ; for, once at liberty to use the produce of our own fields, very little wine would be consumed by persons in the middle rank of life ; nine-tenths of the wine not being either so good or so palatable as drink that can be made out of our own barley and our own hops. Sixteen good round millions would come off by this repeal of the malt tax. But what would then become of the securities for the interest of the debt ? And yet will you send men to Parliament who shall vote for the continuance of this tax, with all its disgraceful evils ; with all the sufferings that it entails upon the millions ? Will you send men to vote for the continuance of this tax, lest the repeal of it should destroy the means of the payment of the interest of the fundholder ? One more question : will you send men to vote against the repeal of the CORN BILL ? Yes, you will, if you send men not to vote for a repeal of the MALT TAX ; for, think what you may of the matter, the Corn Bill can neither be repealed nor mitigated as long as the tax on malt and hops shall continue ; and of this I beg you to be assured.

It requires but very little profundity to perceive the vast advantages that the manufacturers would derive from a repeal of these abominable taxes. The manufacturers are, at the very outside, not more than two millions out of the seventeen or eighteen millions of the people of this kingdom. The rest, after deducting a couple of millions more for the sea-port towns, and the food-consumers of the monstrous wen, are persons employed in agriculture, or in trades or occupations subservient to the purposes of agriculture. These millions, who must be your very best customers, first seek their food, next their drink ; next, their clothing and their bedding. Take, then, threepence a pot from the cost of their drink ; take away that which

is now *wasted* on the foreign articles of tea, coffee, sugar, and wine, and what will become of the savings ? Do you think they will fling the savings into the sea ? not they indeed. The wife and daughters will take care that a part of these savings, and a pretty good part too, shall go to the cotton and the riband shop ; and the men will, once more, get coats upon their backs ; for be you assured that not one penny of the money will be buried in the garden, or under a stone in the cellar. So that you are much more deeply interested in the repeal of the malt and the hop tax than you are in the repeal of the Corn Bill, even if that could possibly be accomplished, which it cannot without a repeal of these taxes.

Well, then, to this point we come at last : even admitting the debt to be a valid debt, which I do not ; even admitting that the last generation had a right to burden this, which I deny, as being a thing abhorrent to every principle of reason and of justice, to this point we come ; that the Reform Bill is to produce no good effect to the people, and the working people especially, unless the security for the payment of the interest of the debt be taken away. Will any one pretend to deny that the Parliament had a right to repeal the tax on salt, the tax on candles, the tax on beer ? Then how can any one pretend to deny its right to repeal the tax upon malt and upon hops ? Of what use, then, can this reform of the Parliament be, unless we acknowledge the right of a reformed Parliament to repeal taxes ; and if we do allow this right, on what foundation stands the interest of the debt, other than that of expediency and convenience, respecting the power and disposition of the nation to pay ? Some years ago, Alexander Baring, the great loan-monger, said that "*the nation was bound to pay, as long as it had anything to pay with.*" This loan-monger chose to place the nation upon the footing of an individual in common life ; and insisted that, like the bankrupt, it was under an obligation to surrender all it had. The bankrupt is bound to surrender all the worldly goods that he has then in his possession ; but the bankrupt *himself*

has been the borrower, or has become the debtor, from some cause or other; it is for his *own use* that he has contracted the debt, and not for the use of his successors. He surrenders *his* all; but he does not extend the surrender to his children. Besides this, the bankrupt is not stripped of the clothes that cover his body; the tools necessary to earn his bread are left him; an act of bankruptcy or insolvency clears him of the past; his creditors cannot deprive him of the use of his limbs, and of his means of making future provision for his wants and his safety. But these inexorable creditors of ours would make us, and even the child in the cradle, slaves to them; would leave us no part of our future earnings; would take all from us except our bare lives; would leave us none of the means of providing either for the safety, or for the upholding of the honour of our country; would make the country submit to invasion, conquest, and everlasting servitude, rather than give up their claim upon the resources of the country! If there be anything so audacious as this; if any pretension equal to this in cruelty, as well as presumption and profligate defiance of the moral sense of mankind, I should be glad to have pointed out to me where I am to find it ever was heard of.

Thus, then, in every possible view that can be taken of the matter, it appears to me clear as day-light, that the people of these northern towns will be guilty of a scandalous breach of duty if they send to Parliament any man not pledged on the conditions which I have before stated; namely, on the conditions stated last evening of payment to the fundholders, to the extent of the amount of the property which the nation has at its disposal; guilty I say of a scandalous abandonment of duty, if they fail to send to the Parliament men pledged to free the nation from this intolerable load.

It now remains for me to offer, with your permission, the observations called for in explanation of the eighth proposition; namely, an *equitable adjustment*, with respect to the pecuniary contracts between man and man; and to rectify, as far as practicable, the wrongs and

ruin inflicted on many thousands by the arbitrary changes in the value of money, which changes were made by acts of the unreformed Parliament; to extend this adjustment to every transaction between man and man; as, without this adjustment, even the abolition of the claim of the fundholders would be of no avail, and even injurious in numerous and most important cases of money lent and money borrowed. In numerous cases of mortgage, marriage-settlement, rent-charge, and annuity, growing out of real property, estates have either been taken away or almost taken away; not by any indiscretion, not by any extravagance, not by any fault of any kind in those who ought to be the owners of the property. The wills of the deceased have been violated; the prospects and the just expectations and reliances of numerous most virtuous and industrious people, have been blasted in an infinite number of cases; those who might be still opulent, are in a state of beggary; and all these grievances have been caused by Acts of the Parliament in changing the value of the money of the country, which acts have been as completely acts of *confiscation* as if they had borne that title, and as if the preambles of them had set forth that it was *expedient* to violate the contracts of the living and the wills of the dead, to blast all the efforts of industry, and all the hopes of virtue; to render human affairs throughout the whole kingdom as uncertain as the movement of the winds and the waves: if the preambles of the acts had set this forth as the ground of the acts, the effects could not have been other than they have been. For what will a reformed Parliament assemble then? What will it be worth, unless it be able to do something in the way of rectifying these enormous wrongs; the main tendency of which has been to deliver over the possessions of the legitimate owners and the earnings of industry to the hands of usury. In thousands upon thousands of cases, skilful, upright, and most industrious merchants, traders, and manufacturers, have been utterly ruined by these arbitrary acts of this Parliament, every one of which tended to the

swelling of the wealth of the usurers, and to the crushing of industry and virtue. A reformed Parliament may, and I trust will, reach the principal actors in these works of ruin; but, not even a reformed Parliament, nor all the wit of man can discover the means of affording anything approaching to redress in those numerous instances where ruin has thus been inflicted on families engaged in commercial pursuits. But where the property is of an immoveable nature, where the deeds and records can be referred to for proof, where the parties are alive, or where there are successors entitled to redress, or sufficient to answer; in all these cases, justice may yet be done; and, if justice be not done, the reformed Parliament will, after all, be a just object of the scorn of mankind.

Oh! the *difficulty*—the impossibility to make such an inquiry into the mortgages, settlements, and the rest! It could never be done! Not done, gentlemen? This same Government and Parliament, though they enacted Peel's Bill, and the panic-bill; though they have done all this mischief, bunglers as they have been in these matters, unhesitatingly as they have lashed their destructive tail amongst the shoals of the community, and with as little mercy as the whale lashes its destructive fins amongst the shoals of the sea; careless as they have been here, and incompetent to every purpose of good, they have been very efficient as to other purposes; and, from their proceedings with regard to them, we must not decline to take a profitable example. They found no difficulty, when they had an income or property-tax to collect; they found no difficulty then, in looking into every man's rent-roll, and every man's lease, they found no difficulty in ascertaining the amount of the profits of every man's trade, no difficulty in ascertaining the number of his children, and in prescribing to him the extent of his annual expenditure; no difficulty do they still find in ascertaining the number of our windows, dogs, horses, carriages, and servants; no difficulty in ascertaining whether we be bachelors or married men; not the smallest difficulty in ascertaining whether we or our families,

or inmates, put powder into our hair or leave it unpowdered; no difficulty do they find, in coming at the curious fact of whether we put arms upon the seals that hang from our watches, or upon the spoons with which we eat our broth; they find not the smallest difficulty in ascertaining whether our canine property consist of greyhounds, hounds, spaniels, pointers, setters, lurchers, mastiffs, or lap-dogs: not the smallest difficulty, again, do they find in ascertaining the number of sheets of paper and print which a pamphlet ought to contain, and even the number of square inches in each sheet, in order to prevent such pamphlet from having a seditious or blasphemous tendency.

What, gentlemen! and cannot such clever men as these discover the means of finding out whether the reputed owner of a piece of real property, is now held to pay, or has been held to pay, more than is, or has been, due to the lender of the money upon that property, whether in the way of mortgage, or in any other way? If they cannot discover this, a reformed Parliament would, or that Parliament would immediately demand further reforming; for, a body of legislators, who could not do that which was so easily done by Solon and by Cæsar, so far from meriting our respect, would deserve to be trampled under foot.

Here, again, the Corn Bill stares us in the face. Nine-tenths of the houses and lands of England are mortgaged, and otherwise charged for more than one-half of their worth. To a certain extent the real property of every country always was, and always must be, thus pledged. It is one of the great uses of real property, that it can be made available in this way; but there is a limit, beyond which this species of pledging becomes destructive of the happiness and even of the peace of a country: and this limit we have long passed. In fact, the usurers, who are also the principal owners of the debt, have in the first place drawn up the resources of the country in taxes; and then they have expended the taxes thus received by them in lending them upon the houses and land; and thus become, in great part, the real owners of the whole king-

dom. Amongst other things, they have become proprietors of boroughs and the makers of laws; and this is the true and only reason why that great source of confiscation has not long ago been swept away. With respect to the *practicability* of making this adjustment, nothing in my mind, that is to say, nothing of considerable magnitude; nothing which has usually been thought to demand the knowledge and talent of a statesman, could be more easy. An act of Parliament, distinctly laying down the *principle* of the adjustment; distinctly providing for the rate of reduction in each year, for forty years past, distinctly laying down the rules by which the commissioners should be bound to decide; such an act, sending three commissioners into each county of the kingdom, and these might be members of Parliament themselves, would settle the whole affair in a month. For, observe, the act would leave the parties to make the settlement themselves if they chose; if they agreed to the settlement, the agreement would be merely ratified, and rendered legally binding by the commissioners. Not one case out of one hundred would be left to be decided by the commissioners, the act being so plain as to the principle and the rule.

If this be not done, even the annihilation of the debt would be an injury to innumerable persons, to a very considerable part of those who are, or ought to be, the possessors of the buildings and the land. First, the debt ought to be swept away, and the other measures adopted which I have submitted to you in these propositions. Then the real value of money, compared with the value of the money in any former year, would be at once and exactly ascertained: and upon the standard thus furnished, the adjustment would be made. Now, gentlemen, unless this be done, the affairs of the nation can never be set to rights; here are grievous wrongs to redress, and if the redress be not afforded by a reformed Parliament, that Parliament will be with me no more an object of respect than are the guttlers and boozers of Bellamy's.

Before I conclude, I cannot help making to you, gentlemen, an observation

or two on the illustration which France now affords us with regard to the workings of that abominable thing called the *national debt*. The public papers inform us that the people of Grenoble, which is a large city in the south-west of France, recently rose to impede the operations of the tax-gatherers; that the tax-gatherers called out the National Guard; that the National Guard consisted of 6,400 men; that only *four hundred* would obey the call of the tax-gatherers; and the probability is, that these *four hundred* were receiving out of the taxes more than they paid; that the tax-gatherers seeing themselves without support, scratched the names of nearly *three thousand* persons out of the tax-book, thereby intimating that these *three thousand* persons should not be called upon to pay the taxes put against their names; that this, however, did not satisfy the people, who *insisted upon burning the book itself*, and who actually burnt it amidst shouts of triumph.

Such are the natural consequences of national debts. Our profound Government thought it had achieved a great object, when, by the means of our debt, it had compelled the French people to submit to debt; thinking that that debt *would keep the French people quiet*. It answered this purpose for awhile; but that debt, which, in the course of only sixteen years of Bourbon sway, has been pushed up to *thirteen millions of pounds sterling* of annual interest, has already produced the driving out of one king; and, if that fund-loving gentleman, LOUIS-PHILIPPE, persist in upholding the debt of France, the consequence to him is by no means difficult to be foreseen. It was the Breton association against the paying of taxes which produced in Charles X. a project for stifling the press of France; because it became evident, that, if that press were left free, the Breton association would speedily be extended all over the kingdom; to give effect to his project, he brought troops into Paris; the people defeated the troops; and CHARLES X. was expelled. To have made the throne of his successor stable, the debt should have been expelled too. That remaining, the people exclaim, "What have we gained

by the revolution other than a mere change of names?" And, if our debt and taxes remain after the reform shall have taken place, will not the people of England exclaim, "What have we gained more than the mere name of reform?"

There has been a proposition made, in several of the great parishes of London, to refuse to pay the direct taxes, unless the Reform Bill pass. The same proposition has been made in several parts of the kingdom; but what sense is there in this, unless the parties expect that the Reform Bill is to produce a diminution at least of taxation? What sense is there in it, if this be not their expectation? This being their expectation, the proposition has clear reason on its side; but again, how is the diminution of taxes to take place, if the great burden of all, and the real cause of the greater part of the rest, remain unabridged? There is no sense in the proposition, unless this expectation be confidently entertained; nor is there any sense in wishing for the Reform Bill to pass.

I have now, gentlemen, offered my opinions with regard to this important matter, and have endeavoured to maintain the correctness of those opinions by arguments which I deem satisfactory. It is not for me dogmatically to assert, that all, who do not agree with me, must be in the wrong; but sincerity calls upon me, openly and clearly to state my opinions to you, and, here, again, to declare my determination not to be the representative of any body of persons, however great might be the honour of being the object of their choice, unless they unequivocally pledge themselves to support me to the utmost in giving effect to measures consonant with these my opinions.

From the *LONDON GAZETTE*,

FRIDAY, JANUARY 27, 1832.

#### INSOLVENTS.

ARMITAGE, J., and J. Greenwood, Clayton and Swamp, Yorksh., worsted-stuff-manuf.  
LONG, T., Brick-lane, Spitalfields, carpenter.

NEWMAN, J., South-st., Chelsea, victualler.  
POYNTON, G.B., Oxford-st., woollen-draper.

#### BANKRUPTCIES ENLARGED.

ROSE, J. E., Bath, linen-draper.  
THOMAS, R., Glyn, Glamorganshire, cattle-dealer.

#### BANKRUPTCIES SUPERSEDED.

CROCKWELL, S., Torquay, Devon, builder.  
HARTNEY, J., Ironmonger-lane, merchant.  
WILLIS, E. P., Chichester, tailor.

#### BANKRUPTS.

ATHEARN, W., Peckham, brick-maker.  
BAUCKHAM, E., otherwise E. Bockham, Providence-row, Kent-road, builder.  
BEECROF, J.R., St. Alban's, Herts, innkeeper.  
BURKE, J., Greenwich, licensed victualler.  
CATLEY, J., Green-st., Leicester-sq., chemist.  
DRAPER, G., Whitechapel, High-st., victualler.  
GEEVES, T., Hendon, Middlesex, hay-salesman.  
GRAY, R., Cottingham and Kingston-upon-Hull, wharfinger.  
HEWITT, W. and T., Kingston-upon-Hull, merchants.  
HODGES, J. S., Bunhill-row, tailor.  
HUNTER, J., Church-passage, Guildhall-yard, undertaker.  
IVORY, W., St. Mary-at-Hill, victualler.  
LEWIS, T., Whitechapel-road, victualler.  
MABERLY, J., Bread-street, Cheapside, and John-street, Berkeley-square, banker.  
SMITH, H. W., Greenwich, carpenter.  
STUART, H., Worcester, wine-merchant.  
TAYLOR, W., Coppull, Lancashire, timber-merchant.  
WILKINSON, T., Finsbury-sq., upholsterer.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 31, 1832.

#### INSOLVENTS.

CRESSEY, C. W., Bristol, tea-dealer.  
CROHN, H. L., John-st, Minories, ship-agent.  
KING, B., Charlotte-street, Rathbone-place, lithographic printer.  
STEPHENS, J., Red Lion-court, Fleet-street, bookseller.

#### BANKRUPTS.

BOND, T., Bath, cabinet-maker.  
DE BUCK, W. J., Broad-street-buildings, general merchant.  
GLAVES, J., Upper East Smithfield, and late of Bordeaux, master-mariner.  
HILL, I., Strand, hatter.  
HUDSON, H., Harrow-street, Paddington, stable-keeper.  
HUGHES, R., Welchpool, Montgomeryshire, saddler.

KAUL, A., Camomile-street, Bishopsgate,  
watch-manufacturer.  
LANGDON, R., East Stonehouse and Ply-  
mouth, rope-maker.  
NICHOLS, J., Stourbridge, Worcestershire,  
wine-merchant.  
PULLEN, R., Newgate-market, carcass-  
butcher.  
SALVIDGE, G., Bedminster, Somersetshire,  
butcher.  
STOKES, W. A., Kidderminster, bookseller.  
THOMAS, W. C., Plymouth, hatter.  
WAGSTAFF, J., Denton, Lancashire, hat-  
manufacturer.  
WALKER, G., Orange-street, Bloomsbury,  
linen-draper.  
WALKER, J., St. John's, Worcestersh., tanner.  
WEBB, T., and W. Pritchard, Pillgwenly,  
Monmouthshire, coal-merchants.  
WILKINSON, T., Shrewsbury, ironmonger.

## SCOTCH SEQUESTRATION.

MONCUR, J., Edinburgh, plumber.

## LONDON MARKETS.

MARK-LANE, CORN-EXCHANGE, JANUARY 30.  
—Since this day se'nnight we have had a tolerable supply of English, Irish, and Scotch wheat; English and Scotch barley; English beans; English and Scotch malt; and English, Irish, Scotch, and foreign flour. Our supplies of Irish and Scotch oats, and foreign peas, great; of foreign wheat, English oats, and seeds from all quarters, have been rather limited.

We have not seen so few buyers in a Monday's market for some time past, especially in the early part of the morning, and as most even of those present kept off from purchasing under the idea of obtaining abatement, the trade was very dull. Very superior wheat, and the finest malting barley, as well as peas, beans, malt, flour, and seeds, were at last week's currency; wheat and barley, generally, as also each kind of oats, at a depression of from 1s. to 2s. per qr. The quotations of rye and brank are but nominal.

|                       |              |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| Wheat .....           | 52s. to 68s. |
| Rye .....             | 34s. to 38s. |
| Barley .....          | 24s. to 32s. |
| — fine .....          | 35s. to 42s. |
| Peas, White .....     | 34s. to 38s. |
| — Boilers .....       | 36s. to 40s. |
| — Grey .....          | 34s. to 38s. |
| Beans, Old .....      | 34s. to 37s. |
| — Tick .....          | 35s. to 38s. |
| Oats, Potatoc .....   | 24s. to 29s. |
| — Poland .....        | 23s. to 26s. |
| — Feed .....          | 17s. to 23s. |
| Flour, per sack ..... | 55s. to 60s. |

## PROVISIONS.

Bacon, Middles, new, 44s. to 46s. per cwt.  
— Sides, new ... 44s. to 46s.  
Pork, India, new ... 125s. 0d. to 128s.  
Pork, Mess, new ... 67s. 0d. to —s. per barl.  
Butter, Belfast ... 92s. to —s. per cwt.  
— Carlow ... 89s. to 92s.  
— Cork ... 91s. to —s.  
— Limerick ... 88s. to 90s.  
— Waterford ... 87s. to 88s.  
— Dublin ... 85s. to 87s.  
Cheese, Cheshire ... 52s. to 83s.  
— Gloucester, Double ... 52s. to 62s.  
— Gloucester, Single ... 48s. to 54s.  
— Edam ... 47s. to 50s.  
— Gouda ... 46s. to 50s.  
Hams, Irish ... 62s. to 70s.

## SMITHFIELD.—January 30.

This day's supply of sheep and beasts was moderately good, but not so great as was that of this day se'nnight; of calves and porkers but limited. The trade was, throughout, very dull: with veal at a depression of full 2d. per stone: with beef, mutton, and pork, at barely Friday's quotations.

Beasts, 2,581; sheep and lambs, 17,130; calves, 110; pigs, 69.

## MARK-LANE.—Friday, Feb. 3.

The arrivals this week are large. The market very dull, at Monday's prices.

## THE FUNDS.

|               |      |      |      |       |      |       |
|---------------|------|------|------|-------|------|-------|
| 3 per Cent. } | Fri. | Sat. | Mon. | Tues. | Wed. | Thur. |
| Cons. Ann. }  | 82½  | 82½  | —    | 82½   | 82½  | 82½   |

Just published,

Price One Shilling, to be continued Monthly,

**THE CHURCH REFORMERS' MAGAZINE** for ENGLAND and IRELAND.  
No. I. for February, 1832.

Effingham Wilson, 88, Royal Exchange;  
(to whom all communications and advertisements are to be addressed).

Sold by W. F. Wakeman, 9, D'Olier-street, Dublin.

\* \* \* Persons in the country are requested to transmit their Orders through their country Booksellers.

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